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PIUS X

Nil Obstat

JOANNES GRAY

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PIUS X

BY

RENÉ BAZIN
(OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY)

TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND EDITION
BY THE BENEDICTINES OF TALACRE

WITH A PREFACE BY
THE RT. REV. FRANCIS J VAUGHAN
BISHOP OF MENEVIA

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PREFACE

THE English-speaking Catholic will thank the Benedictine Nuns of Talacre Abbey for providing René Bazin's admirable *Life of Pius X* in our native tongue, and will congratulate them on their excellent presentation of it.

For many years have we looked on our Holy Father, Pope Pius X, as the personification of all virtues and gifts—sanctity with its attendant humility and simplicity, poverty, learning and artistry. His whole life from its infancy to its termination shines resplendent with it, and its appreciation by the Catholic world is evidenced by the tremendous devotion to him.

A constant stream of pilgrims day by day and all through the day, kneels at his tomb in the crypt of St. Peter's Basilica, and hardly does a moment pass without some one being seen kneeling in supplication under the cupola of St. Peter's, by the side of the brass cross on

6310

the floor indicating the position of the Sovereign Pontiff's tomb below.

Gifted with tremendous energy, Pius X devoted his great activity for the good of the Church. He reformed church music; bettered seminary education; averted the menaces of the anti-clericals in the French Government; reorganised Roman congregations; instituted a new University for Biblical Studies at Rome; exhorted the faithful to frequent and daily communion; initiated the Codification of Canon Law; abolished the " Veto " in elections of the Pope, under pain of excommunication; reformed the Feasts of the Breviary.

He drew all hearts to him, not only because of his fatherly kindness and his charity, but also by his stolid energy. He dispensed in certain details from " Non expedit " imposed by his predecessor, and permitted Italian Catholics to vote politically. He pronounced his categorical " No " to the pretensions of the French Government, in order to defend the liberty of the Church, notwithstanding the persecutions which the clergy, secular and regular, would have to suffer from the perfidious breach of the Concordat.

May they who read this translation learn to know and appreciate the solid virtue and gentle character of this truly apostolic Pope, so lovable, so gentle,

yet so firm. May the day be hastened when we shall see Pius X raised to the Altars of God.

FRANCIS VAUGHAN,
Bishop of Menevia.

TALACRE ABBEY,
10*th September* 1928.

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PIUS X

CHAPTER I

THE CHILD OF RIESE

He was born at Riese, a village in Upper Venetia, not in destitution, but in great poverty. God's blessing does not consist in riches, He has better things to give—a blameless reputation, a noble heart, a God-fearing family.

This was the chosen gift for him who was destined one day to rule the Church. To it must be added the grace of being born in the country, and seeing around him from his earliest years the activity of man peacefully co-operating with that of nature, and often crowned with success.

The country round Riese is flat, but rich in grass and foliage. It is in the plain, which, looked at from the heights of Asolo, appears unending; but when you are at Riese you cannot always catch sight of Asolo towards the north, nor of *Monte Grappa*, nor of the chain of the Trentine Alps behind you, their lofty summits standing in a circle and cutting off the horizon. The view

from nearly every point is restricted. The roads, often bordered with lopped plane trees, wind about; the fields with their crops of wheat, maize, barley, oats, or beans, or with their vines hanging in festoons from the low mulberry trees, are separated one from the other by dykes fed by streams flowing from the Avenale, and by other brooks or torrents coming from the Brenta or the Piave. Bordering the dykes there are water-loving trees, such as alders and willows. It is something if you can catch sight of the elongated corner of a neighbouring field. There are towns here and there in the great valley, all of some importance; no lack of houses round the church with its campanile, or of children on the doorsteps and in the orchards, where peach and apple trees vie with each other for pre-eminence.

A work-loving and a God-fearing people; the wealth of a state and the wealth of God.

"We Italians," said Pius X one day, "are born with the gift of faith." This is evident to any one who travels through Venetia. The attendance at the offices, the number of children, the crosses by the wayside, the statues of Our Lady or the saints let into the walls of houses, as well as the popular expressions, leave no room for doubt on this point.

To give but one instance. If you ask an old

man or an old woman their age, you are sure to receive the touching reply :

" *Poco manca andar casa ;* it won't be long before I go home."

The Sarto family was one of these. The father, Giovanni Battista, married on the 13th of February 1833 Margherita Sanson, a girl of twenty, from the village of Vedelago, by whom he had ten children, eight of whom lived. The eldest of these, born on the 2nd of July 1835 and baptised the following day, was Giuseppe Melchiore.[1]

The next was called Angelo. The other six were girls : Rosa, Teresa, Maria, Antonia, Lucia, and Anna. John Baptist, twenty years his wife's senior, owned a house in Riese, two pieces of land in the neighbouring country, and fulfilled the office of *cursore*, which means that he kept the town hall in order, swept it and did commissions for the mayor, receiving the sum of fifty centimes daily, which even in those days did not go far. So the mother tried to earn something too.

Before her marriage she had been a dressmaker, *faceva la sarta di campagna*, and so now, when she had attended to the house, done her cooking, dressed the little ones, and finished her washing,

[1] The young couple had had, the year following their marriage, a boy named Giuseppe, but he had not lived. They lost also their last child. Giuseppe Melchiore, the future Pope, was really the second child.

sweeping, and mending, if there remained any time before she had to prepare the vegetables and make the soup, she would sit down to stitch at the apron or dress which some neighbour had brought her. She could not take a moment's rest, except on the day when God commands it.

We have only to look at the portrait we have of her, a photograph reproduced in heliogravure, to see what her soul was like, and what a *Mater admirabilis* she must have been. In the portrait she is seated on a chair ; she is wearing a high-necked dress, made of some strong material, an apron apparently of silk, a kerchief crossed over her breast, embroidered with large flowers ; she is sitting up very straight ; you feel that she could get up at a moment's notice, that she is accustomed to do so. But it is the face that rivets our attention. Maria Sarto is not smiling. She must have had a somewhat full face when she was young, but toil and care have caused the cheeks to fall in below the cheek bones on a line with the lips, which are delicately formed. She has a straight nose, small eyes, devoid of either fear or vainglory, a wide, beautiful forehead, and above, glossy grey hair parted in the middle. A kind of natural distinction hangs about this Italian peasant woman, there is a certain dignified gravity, combined with kindness of heart. She comes, indeed,

of true nobility; of that nobility of faith and devotion to duty, of family affection and silence, unknown to the world, but found in every Christian land; she is the mother of the Pope, and Pius X is in many ways very like her.

John Baptist Sarto certainly had less to do than his wife with the bringing up of his children; but he was able to appreciate her exceptional worth and virtue. He was himself very devout, heard Mass every morning, and in the evening explained the catechism to his household and said the family prayers.

Their house, which the passer-by will now recognise from the inscription it bears, remains just as it was when the two parents lived there with their eight children.

It is situated some distance from the church, on the main road to Asolo, quite close to the rambling old inn of the Two Swords, which stretches out its long iron rod with the two blades hanging unevenly. It is now being turned into a museum, later on perhaps it will become a chapel. Nothing has been changed; the simple furniture is what Pius X knew, when he was little Beppi, Beppe or Beppino, whichever you like best.

Below, there are two rooms and a kitchen; above, three rooms, one of which was the bed-sitting-room of Pius X, where, after he had

become a dignitary of the Church, he received visitors, in his flying visits to Riese ; it still bears signs of this, as can be seen by the " armchair," and by the straw mattress on the bed, the thickest in the house—all it possessed of luxury. Another room, the windows of which open on the road, is empty. This is the father and mother's room. It is there that the eldest born—and the others each in their turn—came into the world.

You say : " There must have been a big bed here ? "

" Yes," comes the answer, " a big wooden bed. It was sold by the mother after she became a widow." Then after a pause : " One day when she was in need."

From the window of the " Patriarch's reception-room " there is seen at the back of the house a little yard, then a small garden surrounded by a wall, which complete the domain.

These were the surroundings. We must add that in those far-off days, Venetia still belonged to Austria, since it was only in 1866 that it was re-united to Italy, so that these Italians had their sovereign living at Vienna.

Beppi Sarto, with such Christian parents, could not fail to love the Church and its offices, the priest, and heaven, those things of which so many little children are deprived. They go of them-

selves straight to God. It is enough to have brought up one or two to admire their instinct for what is divine, their wonderful and spontaneous understanding of the supernatural. Blessed in his birth and surroundings, Beppi had from the outset full liberty to know the things of God. As soon as he was big enough, he was put into a little cassock and served Mass, or carried a taper or a censer and mingled with the clergy, who loved to note the look of recollection on the childish features, and the gentle intelligence in his brown eyes.

At eleven years old he became Master of Ceremonies, directing his playfellows, who looked up to him and loved him like a little king. He had a marked taste for all that was sacred, as also for study. At school he carried off all the prizes. His companions were ever ready to listen to the bright, attractive boy, who was always good-humoured, who always had some plan or some game on hand, and of whom the mothers of Riese, their mothers, spoke envyingly. They would follow him.

At some distance from the village there is a sanctuary celebrated in those parts, the Church of the Madonna *delle Cendrole*, founded probably, as the name seems to imply, on the site of some Roman cemetery, and placed under the title of

Our Lady of the Assumption. It rises up white and yellow from among the fields ; it is flanked on the right by a zinc-roofed campanile, and has in front a wide lawn, enclosed and protected by blocks of granite, joined one to another by iron bars. It is something more than a place of pilgrimage visited every year by the inhabitants of the neighbouring townsteads, those of Godego, Poggiana, Loria, Spinea, San Vito, even of the towns of Asolo and Montebelluna. Every week, at the *Cendrole*, several Masses are said, at the request of the faithful, by the clergy of Riese ; and from April to September the first parochial Mass is said there on Sunday. Often enough, at the time when Beppi was an altar boy, a troop of lads, led by him, would come running and singing up to the Church of the *Cendrole*, and getting the farmer, who lived down below, to open the door, would say a prayer, commend themselves to Our Lady and run off gaily.

The Sarto's eldest son did not make his First Communion till the age of eleven, according to the custom of that time, which dispositions such as his might well have condemned. On that day he consecrated himself to God, promising to preserve chastity and to live for Him alone. He was responding then more solemnly to a call which he had heard and understood some years

before. His mother knew nothing about it at first, but she suspected that with her Beppi a special benediction had come to her home ; she thought she might venture to ask him, and did so, with some hesitation. He acknowledged that he wanted to become a priest. She felt all the pride demanded by so high a call, and at once made a sacrifice of the support in bringing up her family, for which she might have looked from the youth, so soon to reach man's estate. She put gratitude into her *fiat voluntas tua*. The father was not so ready to accept. He felt his strength failing ; his wages were low, and expenses increasing. How could they meet the future ? He was tempted to refuse. But his faith, his memory and his wife triumphed over the first movement.

John Baptist bethought himself that his brother Angelo had a son who was a priest ; so had his brother Antonio. He said to himself : " The family wants it." At the bottom of his heart he knew that it was God who was asking for his child, and God never allows Himself to be outdone in generosity. Moreover, Margherita was sure it was right ; he did as she did, he gave his consent.

The one who was happiest perhaps was the parish priest of Riese, Don Tito Fusarini, who knew even better than the parents what was

Beppi's worth, and who said of him: "He has the noblest heart in this land." The curate at this time was giving lessons in Latin to a younger brother; it was decided that he should have two pupils instead of one, and that young Sarto should shortly follow the course of studies at the secondary College of Castelfranco.

Castelfranco is not a big market town, like Riese, it is a combination of two little towns, one ancient, tightly enclosed within its red battlemented ramparts, the other more modern, stretching out here and there around the first. Both are attractive and full of life. The school in which Giuseppe was to continue his studies, in order to become a good priest, is situated in the modern town. Coming from Riese you find yourself right on the promenade which separates the two towns, between the walls of the Middle Ages and the numerous cafés belonging to our own time. Turning to the left, you see almost at once a church at the corner of a street—the Strada San Giacomo; a few steps beyond are the long buildings of the *ginnasio*, where young Sarto entered as a day boarder, on the recommendation of the parish priest.

The distance between Riese and Castelfranco is a long one; it measures seven good kilometres. Going and returning, including his strolls through

the fields, our collegian must have walked close upon four leagues to learn grammar, history, mathematics, etc., so many things which are of use to us, and many others which we must believe were so once. It was a strenuous journey in the winter and not less so in summer, when the burning Venetian sun pours down on the country. Giuseppe seemed hardly to notice it. He had now become a young man, strong and well formed, getting what food he could, and clothed, as one of his friends put it, " as it pleased God." Knowing by hearsay that cobblers charge highly for leather, as soon as he was outside Riese he would take off his shoes, tie them together with a string, and throw them over his shoulder like a wallet. He made himself go barefoot to save his parents' pockets. At the end of the string, also, he hung the little bag in which his mother had put a piece of bread for his lunch, and anything else, if she had it.

At the College of Castelfranco, where he studied for four years, from 1846 to 1850, Giuseppe was from the outset at the top of the class, as he had been at Riese. He threw himself into everything, and manifested in his work as in everything else, according to the testimony of those who knew him in his youth, a never-failing conscientiousness which is no merely natural gift. They also say

that he was of a quick temper, easily moved to anger or indignation, which proves that the gentleness which was later on apparent to every one who saw him must in youth have been the beginning of real virtue, for which he had always to be on the watch and sometimes to fight. Between the morning and afternoon classes he spent the time at the house of some honest people of the name of Finazzi, and to repay their hospitality, gave lessons to their children, younger than himself.

They were decisive years, those years at Castelfranco, during which this boy of the poor family of Riese, working in the sphere of the intellect, was acquiring and maintaining the habit of energetic daily labour like his father and mother, but for a different destiny. Every evening, after the long walk and the classes of the day, he would go to the presbytery at Riese for a Latin lesson with Don Tito Fusarini.

The fourth year, from the autumn of 1849 to the end of July 1850, he no longer made his journey alone. His brother Angelo was with him. He wanted to become a carpenter. So they went their way together along the road bordered by plane trees. And lo ! and behold ! they are no longer on foot. Has the family land yielded double harvest ? Has a piece of good fortune

befallen them ? The father had bought a donkey —not a very big one—and a cart—not one of the best—and he lent them to his sons to take them to Castelfranco. As a matter of fact, in the end Angelo did not become a carpenter, he chose another trade and entered the Austrian police corps. We shall have occasion to show later how noble a heart this second son of the Sarto family also possessed.

Giuseppe came out triumphant in the examinations passed according to official regulations at the Diocesan Seminary of Treviso at the end of the year. He was declared " eminent " for the five series of questions : in Religion, Latin, Greek, History, Geography, and Arithmetic. His papers placed him first among the forty-three extern candidates who were examined by a board of examiners at Treviso. But this success was not what he longed for. He had only one ambition : to enter the greater seminary, finish his course of humanities and follow that of theology.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

No one had any doubt about his vocation. But his family was without means ; so was the parish priest of Riese. What was to be done ? Don Fusarini turned matters over in his mind, and found one way which might help them out of the difficulty.

There existed a certain foundation made by a Bollandist priest, dating from 1363, under the name of the Campion Foundation. Its object was to assist young men without means towards their keep and education.[1] The Patriarch of Venice had the right of nomination to certain free burses.

Now who should be Patriarch of Venice in 1850 but Cardinal Giacomo Monico, the son of a Riese artisan, a cultured man, a poet, and possessed of a generous heart. Would he refuse to help a fellow-townsman, and one as deserving as Giuseppe Sarto ? It was the only hope. Don

[1] *Il seminario di Padova*, autori Prof. Luigi Todesco e Prof. Serena, 1911.

Fusarini, in order to leave no stone unturned, made his request through an influential friend, a canon, Vicar-General of Treviso. The letter was posted on the 27th of July, and the answer anxiously awaited at Riese even more than at Treviso.

A biographer of Pius X, who was also a most intimate friend of his, Don Angelo Marchesan, seems to let us into one of those confidences which he must have received in early days, when he writes these words: "No one who has not been in like circumstances can fully enter into the anguish of heart felt by a young man, called to dedicate himself to study and the priesthood, who, knowing himself to be absolutely devoid of means, looks around, and wonders from what quarter help may be sought."

During the latter days of August the answer came. It was communicated to Giuseppe by the priest of Riese in the following note: "Kneel down, Beppi, and thank God, for He has surely called you to do some work for Him. You will soon go to the seminary, and, like me, you will be a priest."

It was a message of joy for the whole Sarto family, and the neighbours, too, were told of the honour which had come to them. Less than a month later, in the church of Riese, the eldest

son received the *soutane* from the hands of Don Fusarini. He was now an *abatino*, and from that day Margherita Sarto forbade her other children to address their brother by the familiar *thou*, but to use the more ceremonious *you*, thus revealing yet another mark of the delicacy of her soul, of that sweet and reverent spirit which showed her at every turn what was right and fitting; an instinct which is the outcome of Catholicism, the home of all understanding, all respect and all justice. Many have wondered how it was that Giuseppe Sarto, raised little by little to the highest dignities of this world, seemed to be always in the right place, and always to do the right thing. It was the same cause that produced in him also that wonderful insight and sense of fitness.

In the month of November 1850 the *abatino*, preceded by a letter from the Bishop of Treviso, under whose jurisdiction he was, travelled to Padua by coach—there being as yet no rail-road—and entered the greater seminary. The buildings forming the seminary of the illustrious Italian city were large and splendid. The church, with three open arches supporting a rood-loft decorated with frescoes, several rooms dating from the seventeenth century, the refectory, theatre and library, are mentioned in books which treat of the glories of Padua.

There were a large number of seminarists there. Before beginning philosophy, they had to follow a two years' course of humanities, and the next two years, devoted more particularly to philosophy, served to perfect them in the knowledge of Italian, Latin, Greek, history, and natural science. Then only might they begin theology. It will be seen what long and careful preparation was required before beginning sacred science.

Giuseppe Sarto, at the end of his first year there, was pronounced to be head of his course. His reports have been preserved in the archives, and we find the following remarks after his name: "Conduct irreproachable, intellect above the ordinary, memory excellent, a most hopeful subject." Words of praise such as these, referring to the most proficient among some forty students, appear again and again under varied forms throughout the years passed at the seminary. For example, at the end of the first year of philosophy the professors give the following report of their pupil:

"Religion: Remarkably intelligent, shows keen interest in every branch.

"Philosophy: Excellent, shows remarkable mental ability and has acquired in an unusual degree the requisite knowledge, both as to matter and grasp of the subject.

" Italian : Excellent in the facility with which he interprets the classics, in correctness of style, and knowledge of literature.

" Greek : Thorough knowledge of grammar, translation most accurate.

" History : An unusual grasp of modern events and of their chronological order."

It was the same all round. The opinions formed of Giuseppe Sarto by his professors might be summed up in a few words : An intelligence above the ordinary, which is being developed in every direction by assiduous study. But this praise falls short of the whole truth, for it tells us nothing of the soul of the young seminarist, of his piety, the purity of his intentions, the strength already tested ; all that was to be writ large in his life.

Riese was already feeling proud of her son, and as the great poverty of the Sartos was no secret, a collection was made quietly each year among their friends to furnish the *abatino* with the means of buying necessary books and clothes, and of coming home from time to time.

In his second year at Padua, Giuseppe lost his father. He seems to have had some premonition of his death. The sisters of the Pope tell how the seminarist went in tears to the superior and asked for leave of absence.

" Why ? " " Because my father is very ill." It

was true, but no one had told him. The *cursore* of Riese, at the end of April 1852, had caught cold and died after a few days' illness, on the 4th of May. The youngest child, Pietro Gaetano, who did not live, was born on the very day of his father's death. The mother, now a widow, with seven children on her hands, decided to relieve the need by taking up dressmaking once more; she gathered round her her eldest daughters; and with one or two other workwomen, more skilled, formed a little business, by means of which she supported her household.

Soon there came to the young seminarist another sorrow, not, indeed, so bitter as the former, but which, nevertheless, he felt keenly. The parish priest, Don Tito Fusarini, resigned his post on account of illness, and the curate, who had been so true a friend to him, was shortly after nominated to another cure and left the place.

And yet Riese was still Riese. Those who remained loved one another, and the holidays were looked forward to by all. As soon as they came, the mother seemed to live entirely in the present or future. The students of the seminary at Padua spent the three months of August, September, and October with their families. Giuseppe got up at five and went to church, where he spent a considerable time in prayer, heard

Mass, received Holy Communion nearly every day, then recited the Little Office of Our Lady, and at the end of the day in his own room, he read on his knees a chapter of the New Testament.

In the evening in the Sarto's home they had what might be called an Office in common. The Count of Colville, who knew Pius X well, tells us that in this holy home " the day ended by prayer and examination of conscience in common ; they all confessed their faults, and asked pardon of those they had offended, an excellent custom which was observed in the Sarto family, as in those of the early ages of Christianity." Is it any wonder that a saintly soul was the result ? And who can doubt but that there were several such among them.

Souls such as these may toil and suffer and weep ; but their hearts will always remain in peace. Joy is their portion ; they understand the meaning of trial. We can imagine one evening when the burden of life seemed heavier than ever, Margherita Sarto saying in an undertone to her son :

" Beppi, how difficult things are ! "

And he would answer : " They are meant to be. If they were easy, mother, where would be our merit ? " And words such as these she had doubtless been the first to say herself. But they found great happiness in being together.

Beppi, who spent the holidays in study, and read more books than had ever been seen in the house before, often went to visit the friends of his childhood. His robust nature took pleasure in long excursions. He went back to Castelfranco ; he visited Montebelluna and Asolo, dominated by the Castle of the Queen of Cyprus ; and we may be sure the Church of the *Cendrole* was not forgotten. Occasionally an acquaintance, glad to do a good turn to his rising and popular fellow-countryman, would offer him a carriage, and then the *abatino* could go further afield. This, however, was not a common luxury. His old sisters, during the time of his pontificate, told a delightful story. They were recalling the days of their youth, and they said that once at the beginning of the vacation, Margherita Sarto had sent her son, for the journey from Padua to Riese, one of those hired conveyances that the Italians call *carrozzella*. One of her daughters, Teresa, newly married, and become Signora Parolin, was in the carriage. The *abatino* was much pleased and greatly touched by the attention, but he reflected :

" A mere trifle is enough to make people speak ill of a priest. We are a long way from home ; nobody here knows that she is my sister ; it is not printed on her face."

Then he put the portmanteau on the seat, and said :

"Look here, Teresa, I want to go on foot till we get to the last house in Padua, so that I shall miss nothing of the town I live in. Then I will get into the carriage with you."

And so he did. When they reached Riese, the seminarist explained it all to his mother, and thanking her heartily, at the same time begged her, if she ever again sent a carriage to fetch him from Padua, not to let any woman, especially a young one, come in it.

In November 1854 he began, with his fellow-students, the course of theology, which kept him four years longer in the greater seminary. He had been longing for this time to arrive. All the long past of analysis, and comparison between the literary masterpieces of different centuries, and the philosophical systems of all ages, what were they, but a preparation which would enable him the better to penetrate into the inspired writings of God, the Sacred Scriptures; to follow without difficulty the plan of revelation, history, dogma and ethics; to live as much as possible among heavenly things, in order to be able to give to men, his brothers, something of those treasures of which they know so little, and have so great need. To this young seminarist was given the key of the spiritual granary; he was the privileged son to whom the Master Reaper addressed these words:

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"Take My precious grain, pile up the measure, for those below are in need, and when you have distributed what I have given, nay, before, whensoever you please, go back into My granaries; the grain will never be wanting; the lack is of stewards like you; multiply your efforts, I will increase your strength."

What more is there to be said, except that Giuseppe Sarto continued to hold the first place in the course of theology, and stood out even in the memory of the oldest masters as the most distinguished among the students?

We shall do better to note three things which left their mark on the future Pope, as later events have proved. The first is that in the time of Blessed Barbarigo, Bishop of Padua and the real founder of the seminary, towards the end of the seventeenth century, philosophy and theology were taught according to the spirit and method of St. Thomas Aquinas. An edition of his works, those productions of his sound and illuminating genius, was actually published by the celebrated printing establishment of the Paduan seminary (1698) in five folio volumes.[1]

We cannot doubt but that Giuseppe Sarto studied, when at Padua, the *Summa* of St. Thomas.

[1] *La tipografia del seminario di Padova*, autore Don Giuseppe Bellini (1927).

The same Barbarigo had established a School of Gregorian Chant, and every student was obliged to follow the course. Don Sarto from his childhood had loved music, and used to sing sitting at his desk; he became more and more proficient and during his last year was appointed "Director of the Ecclesiastical Chant." Lastly, he who in his Encyclicals and other Acts was to show so wonderful a knowledge of the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, had placed himself under their guidance, from his seminary days.

In a letter of the 14th of January 1858, we have an interesting proof of this. The *abatino* was writing to Don Jacuzzi, the former Curate of Riese, to tell him that at Padua, towards the end of the autumn, the best works of St. Cyprian and St. John Chrysostom, "a fairly correct edition," were to be had at a moderate price. These—in twenty-four volumes—he had managed to procure, "by going without other things," for twenty Italian lire. "But I hear," he adds, "that there are still in the shop other copies of the Fathers," and he offers to buy them for his friend. "Write me a line and I shall look upon it as a privilege to do anything for you, however small."

Giuseppe Sarto, having received the subdiaconate at Treviso, the 19th of September 1857, and the diaconate in the same place, the 27th of February

1858, was ordained priest, with a pontifical dispensation for being eight months under the age, on the 18th of September, in the Cathedral of Castelfranco. It is the church inside the ancient walls, on one side of a little square, which is always swarming with pedlars and children. His mother came from Riese with her daughters. The next morning in her parish church at Riese, she was present at the first Mass of her eldest son. This wonderful day had been prepared for by the prayers and labours of twenty-three years. Her house had been her son's first seminary. The hands of Giuseppe were now consecrated. His lips had received power to change the substance of bread, and to bring down the glorious Body of Jesus Christ under the appearance of the Host. They would loose from sin, infuse courage into souls, and mitigate, by his words of hope, as his mother knew by experience, the sorrows which can have no ending here below. They both prayed, in that union which springs from the same faith, the same joy, the same memories, and the same blood. There was in their hearts no earthly ambition. Their most ardent desire was that the newly-made priest might become a saint hidden, despised, if needs be, for the salvation of many in his native Venetia.

CHAPTER III

TOMBOLO

The Bishop of Treviso, in October 1858, nominated Don Giuseppe Sarto Curate of Tombolo. Don Giuseppe was at that time a young priest, somewhat above the middle height, very thin, but strongly built, as are generally the Italians of the north, and he had a most attractive face. This can be seen by two photographs of that period. A high forehead, abundant hair brushed back, delicately shaped lips, well-modelled cheeks and chin, giving an impression of being well built. You may, if you look around you, find the same type to-day. But the physiognomy, the soul playing on the features, *that* is something rare and incommunicable.

In Giuseppe Sarto there was an air of purity, kindness, and gentleness, which is sometimes seen in the eyes of the young, but which remained with him all his days. Some one said of Pius X later on: "Every upright heart goes straight out to him."

The place to which he came as curate, at the

age of twenty-three, numbered at that time, counting both town and country, somewhat less than fourteen hundred souls. The population is far larger to-day. The country was more or less agricultural, but Tombolo was above all famous in the whole of Venetia and Lombardy as the land of cattle-sellers.

"The people are strong and sturdily built," says Mgr. Marchesan, "quite indifferent to rain, snow, wind or sun. Does any one want to go to market? Let those who will, consider the weather. The native of Tombolo sets out, be it what it may. A rubicund face, pronounced features, a voice hoarse from continual shouting and drinking, an easy gait, loud talk, an ample vest, a cloak with a collar of fur, a stick in his hand; there you have his portrait. But he is not bad; he possesses a good heart and he is religious."

It will not surprise any one to hear further that the native of Tombolo was given to swearing. This was a great trial to the curate, who employed much zeal and much ingenuity in order to correct his cattle-sellers. An Italian newspaper relates that a group of parishioners, talking with Don Giuseppe, were complaining that they could not read and had no knowledge of arithmetic, though when it was a matter of right reckoning, they were never at a loss.

" Would you care for a night school ? "

" Rather ! " came in a chorus.

" Give in your names then ! " And they did so in large numbers, but in varying degrees of ignorance. There were some who knew a little, and others who knew nothing at all. They sought out Don Giuseppe, and laid the case before him.

" I foresaw how it would be," he said, " so we will have two sets. We will give those who can read and count a little to the schoolmasters, and I will take those who know nothing at all."

" Why should you take them ? " they asked.

" Because it will be the hardest work."

Then the younger ones said : " Don Giuseppe, what shall we give you to show our gratitude ? "

" Not money, but something much more important ; let there be an end to all your blaspheming ! "

They very soon got to know him. Some kindness is grave ; his was full of gaiety. He knew well that a pastime may be a good work. He used to play bowls with them when he was able ; but this could not be very often, for want of leisure. He was working with a priest who was constantly out of health, not old, but well-nigh helpless. He used to look after Don Antonio Constantini, ask his advice, and often he had to take his place. What with offices, homilies, visiting the sick,

receiving visits from the able-bodied, which began by complaints and ended by alms, confessions, catechism classes, choir practices—for had he not undertaken to teach his parishioners to sing in parts—every minute and hour of the day was so taken up that he had to keep a sharp look-out to find time to get through his breviary, prepare sermons, and continue his study of Holy Scripture and theology. The cattle-sellers who came back late at night from some fair, the youths who came home early in the morning, after spending the night in dancing at some country wedding, would raise their eyes towards the window of the room where their friend, the curate, lived. Had he gone to bed? Was he already up? Would the candle be lit? And nearly always, in the house of the old master-mason, Francesco Beghetto, where he lodged, there was a light in Don Giuseppe's window. An intimate friend who knew how hard he worked, asked him one day:

"Now tell me the truth, how many hours do you consider you need, in order to feel you have slept your full?"

"Four," replied Don Giuseppe.

"Happy man," returned the other, "you know how to live; the rest of us are dead."

Already in those far-off days, when he had barely enough for himself, he gave away more

than he possessed. All through his life, those who had charge of his table, his wardrobe, his small necessary expenses, whether the presbytery servants, his own sisters, or his secretary, complained that there was no measure in his charity.

We are told how one day when he had been preaching a panegyric at some place in the neighbourhood, and had received a gold piece as stipend, he came back to Tombolo without a farthing, because some poor people had begged of him. Another day a man who wanted to go to Verona to look for work, and had no means of getting there, asked him for a half-" marengo," about ten francs. But Don Giuseppe's purse was empty. The man, remembering that priests at that time received little remunerations in kind, asked immediately :

" But haven't you any maize ? "

" Maize ? Yes, I have some."

" Would you . . . ? "

" Certainly, fetch a sack and come back."

The man came back with the sack, and Don Giuseppe taking him into the granary, showed him a heap of grain measuring a little less than three bushels, and said :

" Half for you and half for me. Will that suit you ? "

" Couldn't be better ! "

When the poor man—or he who passed for one—had put half the amount in his sack and the sack on his back, he tried to thank ; but " there was a lump in his throat," and all he could get out was :

" God reward you, Don Giuseppe ! "

The Tombolese liked hearing Don Giuseppe preach.

What was it on ? Always the Gospel. His preaching was luminous and powerful, there was a tenderness about it ; it made them feel that he continually meditated, and also lived the Book he was expounding.

He spoke easily and had a beautiful voice, so that people found pleasure and profit of another kind in hearing him. He was often asked to preach at various places in the neighbourhood, and he used to accept. His reputation began to spread throughout Venetia. People said :

" He is too good for us. How is it that he is left here ? Five, seven, eight years, and he is still at Tombolo ! "

Don Constantini had thought the same, for some time back he had already written to a friend : " They have sent me as curate a young priest, and told me to instruct him in the duties of a parish priest. I assure you it is just the other way round. He is so full of zeal and good sense

and other admirable qualities that it is I who learn from him."

Perhaps some day the MS. of his early discourses—which he always prepared—may come to light. One at least is known—it was published by the newspapers at the time—the panegyric he pronounced at Citadella, the 24th of November 1863, on Signora Elisabeth Viani, a lady of rank of most humble disposition, possessing great riches, which she gave away in alms, a benefactress of Citadella and Tombolo, who had died the year before. The young curate was then twenty-eight years of age. This funeral oration is very beautiful, especially in the way that this poor curate, the son of poor parents, praises riches rightly used and raises them to the high dignity of evangelical poverty, declaring that the first beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor," was spoken by Christ also for the rich who have in their hearts the love of poverty. A truth, indeed, of which there can be no doubt, but of which we often lose sight.

"I do not mean," he said, "to praise that unavoidable and inevitable necessity to which those are condemned who are born in families lacking means of livelihood, and who have no opportunity of ameliorating their condition; in order to deserve praise they must transform their want into a virtue.

" Neither do I look upon those as truly poor who wander from place to place dressed in rags, because for the most part under the appearance of poverty is hidden the desire of possession ; but according to the law of the spirit and truth, I call those poor who, though abounding in riches, are detached in their hearts and wills from all possessions that earth can offer them."

The rare merit of Don Giuseppe Sarto could not remain hidden for ever. On a certain day in the year 1866, in the presbytery of Tombolo, a canon from Treviso was paying a vist to his friend, Don Constantini. The latter, who was devoted to his curate and looked upon him as a saint, suddenly bethought himself of recommending him to the canon. He spoke in such glowing terms of Don Giuseppe that the illustrious visitor from Treviso was fired with enthusiasm.

" After all," he said, " that young priest went through his course of studies at Padua. In our diocese his superiors do not know him. . . . Do you think he would be capable of preaching the panegyric of St. Antony in the cathedral ? "

" I am quite sure he would," replied the other.

" I will bear it in mind," said the canon.

And so it happened that Don Giuseppe was invited to speak in the city.

The parish priest of Tombolo, who was not

able to accompany his curate, wished at any rate to provide him with an audience, and he wrote a letter which several remember to have read with surprise, and the words of which they afterwards recalled with amazement. For it ran thus :

" Go and hear him, and take your friends with you, and let me hear of his success, and what people say and think of him. . . . Mark my words ; it will not be long before we see him in charge of one of the most important parishes of the diocese ; after that he will be given red stockings ! And then . . . ? "

On Wednesday, the 13th of June 1866, after High Mass, the curate of Tombolo, in the presence of an immense audience, pronounced the panegyric of St. Antony of Padua. The people of Treviso had said :

" Who in the world have they sent to preach to us this year ? "

The discourse lasted an hour and a quarter, and the Trevisans returned home with a totally different opinion of the curate of Tombolo.

" They sent us some one worth hearing," they said, " and that young man has a future before him."

Ten months later the ecclesiastical authorities opened a competition for the charge of five parishes in the diocese. Don Giuseppe, on the invitation of the Bishop of Treviso, sent in his

name among the competitors, passed both the written and oral examinations, and was given the most important of the five cures, that of Salzano, in the district of Mestre.

At the time of which we are speaking a very important event had taken place. Following on a war which placed Austria on one side and Prussia and Italy on the other, the Emperor of Austria had ceded Venetia to Napoleon III, who had given it over to his ally, Victor Emmanuel. This brought about many changes. Riese, as well as Venice, Castelfranco, Tombolo, Treviso, all the towns and villages, passed from the dominion of the ancient Empire to that of the new kingdom.

The people, Italian by birth, became subjects of an Italian king. Good Margherita Sarto, with her sons and daughters and many others like them for a long way round, lived, harvested and gathered in the grapes under the sun of Italy. Giuseppe, now an Italian citizen, took part, with all his soul, in the popular celebrations which were held at Tombolo and everywhere, on the liberation of the province.

His brother, we have said, had entered the Austrian Police Corps. As there was no longer any Austria to serve, and he found himself at large, his friends advised him to enrol himself among the Italian carbineers.

" You won't have to change your trade," they said ; " and they'll accept you at once."

" I'm quite willing," replied Angelo, " but on two conditions."

" Out with them, what are they ? "

" First of all, I have sworn fidelity to the Emperor of Austria. I must be set free from that."

" I should never have given it a thought. What's the other ? "

" He gave me a horse ; I owe the price of it."

Nothing could move him. Angelo Sarto set off for Vienna, which was not a short journey in those days. When he reached the capital, it is easy to guess how the military and civil authorities to whom he applied, regarded him with amazement, and assured him that after the Treaty he was under no obligation on account of either the oath or the horse. But he had used all his journey money, and had to be sent home at the expense of the State. On his return he served in the Italian carbineers, and some years later was put in charge of a post office by the Italian Government.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT PARISH

One Saturday evening in the middle of June the new parish priest arrived at Salzano in a very modest conveyance, three of his sisters having gone on before to get the house ready. He was thirty-two years of age. The parish that had been assigned to him was one of the largest in the diocese, numbering over two thousand inhabitants.

This time it was a purely agricultural district. It is easy to get there to-day by the railway from Venice to Treviso. The station is about a mile and a quarter from the village. The country is pleasing and fertile ; as at Riese, water drawn from distant rivers flows through the dykes ; grass, short and abundant, covers the face of the land ; here and there are seen well-built farms, their porticoes open towards the south, and old bell-shaped wells, built of solid stone, looking like the capital of some hollow column, through which the chain goes creaking down. Rising above the

well-levelled country, there can be seen from a long distance the campanile of the church, surmounted by an angel.

The road turns before reaching the village. You come upon the church, flanked by its high tower, almost at once, and a little to the right there is a big, square, brick-coloured house, with a garden in front, which could be nothing else but the garden of a priest. And it is, in fact, the residence of the priest of Salzano. In Don Giuseppe's days the presbytery, built at the farther end of the square, almost touched the church, but it has been pulled down.

However, the memory of the priest who lived there has never died. If you mention the name of Pius X to-day before an inhabitant of Salzano, he at once assumes the air of a man who is reminded of some honour accruing to his family. And he says : " Yes, we had him here for eight years." If he is young, or not too pressed for time, he will take you into the church, paved with red and white flagstones, thanks to Father Sarto, and show you the tribune, given by Pius X and later on enlarged by the Pope's generosity ; you will see also above a door about half-way down the nave, a white marble bust, to which the artist, with Salzano in view, has given more youth than his model, the Sovereign Pontiff, then possessed.

The parish priest of Salzano was just like the curate of Tombolo: one who forgot nothing except himself. He had two curates, and on the eves of feasts he could count on another experienced priest to help him through the confessions. It was not too much when you think that in this land of great faith the number of annual communions is nearly sixty thousand, and that even at the end of last century it was very considerable.

The saint of whom the new priest spoke oftenest was St. Vincent of Paul, of whom he said: "He understood that God wants us to live, not for ourselves, but for every one who crosses our path . . ." An admirable saying, which most people are content to copy into a notebook, and read over occasionally. But Don Giuseppe put it into practice, and it was not for the first time. One of his friends, the priest of the neighbouring parish of Noale, came to visit him. While he was there Don Giuseppe said:

"Will you do me a kindness?"

"Willingly; what is it?"

"Help me to sell my horse; you know people who might buy it."

For the head priest at Salzano had a horse and carriage. Only he practised so faithfully the maxim of St. Vincent of Paul that they were at

every one's disposal, and the poor horse being always on the trot and the carriage in use . . . !

" Oh ! yes," said the intrepid friend, " I'll sell your horse for you."

" And the carriage, too, will you ? "

" I should keep it a little longer, if I were you. Do you really think one could ask any Christian to buy it ? "

And Don Giuseppe being obliged to keep the carriage only lent it henceforward to those who had horses.

Already at Tombolo he had put to pawn the only two valuables he possessed—his watch and a silver spoon and fork. It was the same thing at Salzano, where there were no lack of poor, a hospital somewhat badly equipped, and other institutions needing support. The Father spent beyond his income. The remonstrances of Rosa and Anna were of no avail ; the only answer they received was : " God's providence will never fail us." But the people in the big parish, who hung on Don Giuseppe's words when he preached, understood still better the preaching of the selfless life he lived. They realised that he was full of the joy which comes from a heart that is at peace ; they knew his piety, and his readiness to do a kindness in season and out of season : they were now to see his heroism. This was in 1873,

when Venetia was ravaged by an epidemic of cholera. The most authentic account of this beautiful episode in the life of Giuseppe Sarto seems to be that written by Mgr. Marchesan, whose work appeared at the very beginning of the Pontificate of Pius X, and who had known, questioned and listened to actors in scenes, which had changed the respect already felt by his parishioners for the parish priest of Salzano into a kind of devotion. We reproduce a few passages:

"The cholera was doing its fatal work in our neighbourhood, being worse in some places than others. It was then that Don Giuseppe showed what a good work, both material and spiritual, can be done by a devoted priest amongst his parishioners, disheartened and broken down by disease. He seemed to be everywhere. There were the dead to be buried, the sick to be confessed; here was a household in dire need; there, no one to look after the sick and give them proper remedies: somebody must be on the spot to observe, to assist, to counsel . . . And Don Giuseppe, on fire with zeal and charity, by day and by night, at any moment, gave assistance and counsel. . . . Knowing that the duty of helping the sick falls in the first place on the parish priest, he did not wish his curates to expose themselves to any danger, but would go himself whenever possible to the

bedside of the sick person, and as a rule, he not only administered spiritual assistance, but also material help. This he did with the greatest devotion, going so far as to give ice frictions as though he were in very truth their infirmarian. He instilled courage into all hearts. Following the doctor's instructions, he prescribed the remedies of the moment. In order to stimulate physical depression and cause reaction, if he came at the right time, he would try at least to make the sick person drink some wine.

" One day he was sent for, in haste. He went at once.

" ' Father,' said the patient, as soon as he saw him, ' I am a dead man.'

" ' Oh no, you aren't dead.'

" ' Yes, I am, Father, I'm dead, dead ! Hear my confession quickly.'

" ' Very well, I will hear your confession,' said Don Giuseppe.

" Then turning to one of the family :

" ' Run to Sogaro and ask him from me to give you two quarts of good wine.'

" The messenger came back quickly with the wine.

" ' Now drink that,' said Don Giuseppe to the patient.

" ' Father, I can't, it will kill me.'

" It must be mentioned that in times of epidemic our people get terrible prejudices ; they think that the doctor or nurses are going to give them poison in order to hasten their departure for another world. The Father, with his usual penetration, understood the reason of the refusal, and pouring out a glass of wine, drank it off and said :

" ' Now, it is your turn ! '

" The patient, seeing this, became obedient, swallowed a glass of wine, and at the instance of Don Giuseppe, a second, a third, and even a fourth . . . The next day he was better. . . .

" ' God be praised ! ' an old woman of Salzano said to me ; ' if it hadn't been for our beloved Father, Don Giuseppe, I should have been dead from fright and from all I went through at that time ! '

" One day, Giuseppe, with the sacristan, went to an outlying part of the parish for a funeral. Whether there was some misunderstanding, or whether every one was really out working on the land, the fact remains that there were only three men, and that they wanted a fourth, to carry the body over an awkward place where there was a bridge.

" Don Giuseppe saw how things were, but said nothing ; he intoned the ' De Profundis,' and then just as he was, in surplice and stole, took the fourth

place, and helped to carry the body over the bridge.

" In times of epidemic, for reasons of hygiene, it is customary to bury the dead during the night, and only those persons whose presence is indispensable are allowed to assist.

" The priest of Salzano, who passed his nights without sleep in order to help the poor victims, and deprived himself of food that he might have wherewithal to give to those in need, used also to assist at these nocturnal burials, in order to prevent any sacrilegious acts from disturbing the sad function . . ."

Rosa made fruitless efforts to curb her brother's zeal.

" He never spares himself," she said, " he says ' Yes ' to every one ! "

The poor Father, she added, was nothing but skin and bones when this terrible time was over, and it took long months for him to recover his ordinary health.

At Salzano, as he had been at Tombolo, Don Giuseppe was most solicitous for the well-being of the schools, and saw that they were regularly attended by as many children as possible ; as before, he taught the teachers, and spared no pains to make poor, weak, lovable human nature, surrounded by so many enemies conspiring against

its salvation, cognizant at least of its destiny, its dignity, and its God. And there, also, he reformed the Ecclesiastical Chant.

It was to his merits and his charitable excesses that he owed his nomination as Canon of the Chapter of Treviso, Chancellor of the Diocese, and Spiritual Director of the greater Seminary. He had borrowed twenty-five thousand francs to enlarge and repair the Hospital of Salzano. It was a large sum in those days, especially for him. The Bishop of Treviso, Mgr. Zinelli, who had promoted Don Giuseppe from Tombolo to Salzano, came to the latter place for a pastoral visit. He scolded the culprit, who was embarrassed but impenitent.

" You will end," he said, " by laying hands on the censer ! "

From all sides, however, the Bishop heard nothing but praise of the charitable Father. Before leaving Salzano, Mgr. Zinelli pronounced sentence in these terms :

" To prevent your committing any further follies, I am going to make you a Canon of my Cathedral.

Don Giuseppe protested : " I am nothing but a poor country bumpkin," he said.

But it was of no avail.

CHAPTER V

THE YEARS AT TREVISO

On Sunday, the 28th November 1875, a blusterous, rainy morning, Mgr. Giuseppe Sarto appeared for the first time in his canon's stall, in the choir of the ancient cathedral dedicated to St. Peter.

Treviso on the Sile, Treviso on the road from Venice to Trieste, the town of art and chivalry, bathed in light, of whom the poet Fazio degli Uberti has written :

> We found Treviso on our way,
> Smiling through her crystal fountains ;

Treviso, moreover, where he had received minor orders, was a place already familiar and dear to the heart of this Venetian.

The canons of Treviso, in virtue of some ancient decrees emanating from the Senate of the Most Serene Republic of Venice, had the right of wearing a costume of violet cloth, consisting of a mantle with train, soutane, collar and belt. Even the hat was violet. They went by the name of *monsignori*. Round the neck they wore a pectoral

cross, the cord of which had golden threads running through it. In the course of years the woollen material had become silk. In the dyers' coppers also the blue tint had diminished and the red increased. It was Mgr. Sarto's custom, from the outset, to go out in the city dressed in black, with nothing which could call attention to the fact that he was a canon of the great cathedral, except, perhaps, the violet collar.

He was considered rather rigid ; some let him know this, but he said nothing ; and in the end, nearly all the old canons followed the example of the new one.

The duties of chancellor were quite new to him, but circumstances and his remarkable powers of discernment soon made him familiar with them. It was most necessary that he should be. The Vicar-General, who was getting old, left more and more in the hands of the chancellor. The Bishop was struck down by apoplexy, and though to some degree he recovered his health, he had lost that activity which had made Mgr. Zinelli one of the most distinguished bishops of Northern Italy.

It was Mgr. Sarto who for several years, on numberless occasions, and in the most diverse matters held the administration in their name. He was a great success. We all know, when we

have reached the other side of forty—a time of life when our work often involves interviews with numberless clients—how exhausting it is to receive long queues of people, whether they all ask the same thing, or whether they try in a few minutes to make us understand the most intricate business, the thought of which is never out of their own minds day or night ; how difficult it is, above all, to give to the fourth, and fifth, . . . and alas ! the eighth, the same interested attention we had bestowed on the first. Mgr. Sarto had for all the same gracious welcome, the same patience ; and, moreover, the accuracy of his judgment, in deciding the cases laid before him, remained unimpaired till the last. Men were lost in admiration. Since he was, as we have already remarked, quick-tempered and sensitive by nature, perhaps in this quiet office-work there lay one of the strongest proofs of his virtue.

At the time of his elevation to the Papacy, the professors of the seminary, interviewed by a correspondent of *La Croix* from Paris, expressed their astonishment at his power of self-control.

" We can assure you," they said, " that he always did the work of four. He was the first to rise, and the last to put out his light. At four o'clock he was up, at half-past eleven at night he was still working. However early any of us came

to the chapel to say his Mass we were sure to come upon Mgr. Sarto, either finishing his own or beginning his Thanksgiving.

" Every morning he used to read aloud the meditation for the seminarists ; go to the cathedral in his capacity of canon to chant the Divine Office, then to his office in the bishop's palace. After spending the whole morning there, till two o'clock, which is the hour at which, during the scholastic year, we have our common meal, he would come to the seminary, bringing with him papers to be examined and letters to be despatched. He would sit at the table, smiling, for however much he was pressed by business, he never seemed to be anxious, preoccupied or agitated. He was always full of good-natured fun and playful repartees. His brave and joyous spirit made itself felt, and every one came under the influence of his virile good humour . . .

" This meal was his only recreation ; when it was over he retired to his room to work.

" There was only one thing which would arouse impatience—I might almost say aversion—in Mgr. Sarto ; that was when he found a seminarist grumbling or giving way to softness."

The rooms set apart for the spiritual director were on the second floor, and consisted of an office measuring sixteen and a half feet square, and a

sleeping room of still smaller dimensions; but the windows looked out on the gardens towards the south, on the calm waters of the Sile, and the wide horizon of open country, where the leafy branches of the plane trees and the tops of the poplars are the only reminders that there are such things as hills in the world. Assuredly Giuseppe Sarto appreciated the serene beauty of this landscape, just as later on he loved the Roman distances and *Campagna*, but he was far from indulging himself in this pleasure ; he had not the time. As soon as he returned from the bishop's palace to the seminary with a batch of papers waiting to be looked through at the first free moment, he had to give himself up to his various duties as spiritual director. It was an onerous charge. He prepared religious instructions and meditations for the seminarists ; he was confessor and director to most of them—how many visitors, what exercise of charity, how much correspondence and trouble this involved !—moreover, he used to prepare for their first communion the boys of a secondary college annexed to the seminary ; he even gave, in 1883-84, a course of religious instruction to the pupils of the higher classes. The students loved listening to him, and that is no mean praise. Not only did the seminarists follow the instructions of Mgr. Sarto with pleasure and a sense of security,

but the little ones also looked forward to their catechism class. They realised the knowledge that lay behind his clear explanations ; they read his soul in his eyes ; he spoke beautiful Italian, and many of his words left lasting impressions on their receptive young minds. But his natural charm was enhanced by grace, and this was the secret of his power. His extreme humility was in no wise lost upon his young auditors ; and it never prevented their seeing that they had at the seminary of Treviso a man whose estimate of himself fell very far below the mark. The first time he made his appearance in the director's chair the seminarists understood him. Yet, how few professors would have introduced themselves to their pupils as he did ! Mgr. Marchesan, who was among the audience, remembers the exact words :

" My dear young friends, perhaps you expect to find in me one of those spiritual fathers who, from long experience among numberless students, intimate knowledge of asceticism and theology, and a scholarly way of expressing their thoughts, would be capable of directing and counselling you, that you may, with the help of God, advance securely in your way of life. But let me tell you plainly, I possess nothing, or almost nothing, of all that ; I am only a poor country priest, who have come here by the will of God ; and since our Lord

has willed it so, you on your side must be ready to listen to the words of a poor country priest, and be indulgent if what he says is inadequate to the office which his superiors have seen fit to lay upon one so incapable and unworthy."

After this he proceeded to give them an extremely good discourse, and the theological students, as they came out of church, said one to another : " There's a country priest for you ! What did you think of it ? What a wonderful discourse ! "

Those who are born to serve, if they have great souls, are often astonished when they rise ; not so, however, the lookers-on. Mgr. Sarto frequently repeated to those priests of the future, the words of St. Paul :

" Be not led away with various and strange doctrines."

He used to say of the Catholic religion : " It has the primacy of certitude, above all heterodox religious systems, as also above all human science." "Absolute truth must be immutable . . . What the first man, and what the saints of the Old Testament believed *in embryo*, is believed by all Catholics to-day. The faith of those ancient times and of our own meet, and are united to the one indissoluble centre of truth, Jesus Christ. Whereas, if you study the history of all the different

sciences, you will see in the gradual shifting of their theories the mark of their fallibility."

Felicitous expressions these, manifesting a mind well versed in doctrine.

One evening, the occupant of the room next to his own seeing him tired and still writing, begged him to take a little rest.

" Do go to bed, Monsignore," he said ; " those who work too much don't work so well."

" You are quite right, Don Francesco," was the laughing reply, " you go to bed, and sleep well ! " Sometimes, before the dawn, he was still working, and it was noticed that his bed had not been touched.

Among the studies undertaken by this indefatigable worker during the years spent at Treviso, we must specially mention the works of Cardinal Pie, Bishop of Poitiers. Many years later he mentioned this himself to a visitor whom he received in Rome, Mgr. de Teil, who came there as vice-promoter, for France, of the cause of beatification of Pius IX. He said to him :

" Most Holy Father, I was a pupil of Cardinal Pie."

" Were you his pupil ? " replied the Pope, with an expression of pleased surprise. " When I was vicar-general I wanted to accustom myself to read French. My bishop heard of this. He was

a warm admirer of the part played by Cardinal Pie at the Vatican Council. ' Read *his* works,' he said to me. I set to work at once. I have read everything he has written ; he is my master."

And so the days passed by, each hour having its allotted task. Dignities were about to fall on him who avoided them. On the 12th of June 1879 Mgr. Zinelli invested him with one of the three charges of the Chapter of Treviso, to which a small supplementary stipend was attached, nominating him *Primicerius*. In November, this excellent bishop died, and the chapter elected, as Vicar-Capitular, Mgr. Giuseppe Sarto, who held this delicate position for seven months. In this capacity he came at once in contact with the representatives of the Government, and especially with the officials of the Royal Exchequer of Venice, whose business it was, while the See was vacant, to provide the means for necessary expenditure. Mgr. Sarto lost no time in communicating with them to the effect that the Diocese of Treviso was in great financial difficulties, and that owing to the death of the bishop, it had incurred heavy expenses which it was unable to meet. He expressed his confidence in the measures which would be taken by the head of the Royal Exchequer, who was receiving the returns of the episcopal revenue. The reply of this official was not without pre-

cedent, and it gave rise to subsequent imitations. He notified that, having examined the case, he would grant a hundred lire a month to meet the diocesan expenses. The denial of justice was flagrant.

Pius X was to meet with other like cases. But he was already living in the vicar-capitular, who took up his pen and wrote as follows :

" A hundred lire a month, when for correspondence alone forty will not suffice ! The poor may have to be content with the crumbs which fall from the tables of the rich, but I have on my side civil and canon law, both of which are perfectly clear on this point, and I will not allow myself to be branded as one who would not demand the just dues."

A " candidate " for the episcopate would perhaps not have demanded them ; Giuseppe Sarto was only a candidate for heaven. What strength, and what freedom ! there was no counting the cost ; as soon as the voice of justice was heard, he replied, " here I am " ; no anxiety as to consequences ; no cowardly reasonings ; the knowledge that he was accomplishing God's will stimulated his courage, and the world took a back seat !

Strength and gentleness were the only arms of this holy priest. The long preparation was at an end. Mgr. Sarto had been twice to Rome : the

first time during the Pontificate of Pius IX, whose Episcopal Jubilee was being celebrated throughout the Catholic world in June 1877 ; lost among the Italian pilgrims, he passed by, was blessed, and retired unknown ; the second time, in October 1881, at the time of the pilgrimage made by Catholics, in reparation for the outrages perpetrated on the remains of Pius IX, when he did not even see the new Pope, Leo XIII. He had only passed through the city as a stranger, he made no effort to gain for himself a protector among the prelates of the Papal Court ; but he had one, nevertheless—the Pope himself, that great teacher of the faith, who was also a reader of men, and who kept himself well informed.

CHAPTER VI

THE BISHOP OF MANTUA

One morning in September 1884 the chancellor of the Diocese of Treviso was at work, as usual, in his office.

The day before, the new bishop had unexpectedly broken off in the midst of his pastoral visitations and returned to the city. Nobody knew the cause of this sudden change of plans, when some one knocked at Mgr. Sarto's door : " His lordship would like to speak with you." The chancellor went down to the bishop's apartments.

" Dear Monsignore," said the latter, " come with me for a moment," and leading the way, he took him into his private chapel. " Kneel down, dear Monsignore," he continued, " we must both pray about something which will affect us both."

Surprised and perturbed, Giuseppe Sarto knelt down and prayed. After a moment, Mgr. Apollonio rose, and without a word, handed his friend the Pontifical despatch nominating Giuseppe Sarto Bishop of Mantua.

It was as though he had received the news of a great misfortune. In face of the formidable distinction, Mgr. Sarto remained defenceless; he covered his face with his hands, and his tears began to flow. The exhortations of his bishop made no impression. His great soul thought only of the onerous charge that had been laid upon him.

When he had recovered his self-possession, his habitual strength of mind and powers of expression came to the fore, and he declared that it was a mistake, that he was utterly incapable of occupying so important a post, and that he would write to the Sovereign Pontiff. At last his sunny nature, always ready to see the humorous side, reasserted itself, and he ended the conversation, begun in tears, by saying:

"Really, my Lord, this is the last straw!"

As soon as he was alone, he wrote off to Rome.

Leo XIII who, like every other Pope, was wont sometimes to receive letters of this kind, took no notice.

Giuseppe Sarto was really the Bishop of Mantua.

In the outside world, no one was surprised. Giuseppe Sarto had friends at places other than Treviso, Salzano, and Tombolo; his great eloquence had brought him invitations from many of the town and villages of Venetia, and for a long time people had been saying as they came out of the

churches where he had preached : " This priest won't die in his bed at Treviso."

The newspapers recalled the predictions made by his former parishioners from the very first. The Catholic *Difesa*, a Venetian paper, promised the Mantuans that they would have a bishop whom they could not fail to love.

" It is enough to look upon the cheerful, open countenance of this true Venetian, with kindness written all over it ; it is enough to listen to his gentle, spontaneous, glowing diction, full of a rare eloquence which has always ranked him as an orator, but has now made him famous. Whoever has heard him preaching with that musical voice of his, pouring forth from his soul words of burning charity, will not be convicted of any exaggeration when he asserts that the preaching of Mgr. Sarto is equal to that of St. Francis of Sales. . . ."

Mgr. Sarto, after a touching farewell to his colleagues at the seminary, left the city on the 5th of November for Rome. At the stations of Mestre and Padua he was met by delegations of the clergy. On the 8th he was received by Leo XIII. Two days later he was preconised at the Consistory in which the Pope inveighed strongly against the war being made by secret societies against the Church ; he was consecrated on the 16th by Cardinal Parocchi, in the Church of St. Apolli-

narius. It was the third Sunday in November, and the gospel that the Church appoints to be read at that time relates the Parable of the Leaven that a woman hid in three measures of meal, and which leavened the whole lump.

The evening of the same day, Leo XIII granted an audience to the new prelate. He gave him a pectoral cross inlaid with precious stones, a Roman Pontifical in five volumes beautifully bound ; but most precious gift of all were his parting words, full of encouragement :

" If the people of Mantua are not pleased with their new pastor, they never will be with any one, for Mgr. Sarto is the most lovable of bishops."

On his return to Treviso, after receiving from the inhabitants of that city the reiterated expression of the sorrow they felt at losing him, the bishop wished to pay a farewell visit to his former parishioners at Salzano. Going there on Sunday, the 8th of February, he celebrated Mass, spoke to them of the years he had passed amongst them, and after vespers, went up into the pulpit once more. He wished to recommend to his friends the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Hardly had he begun his discourse when the door of the church opened, to admit the Bishop of Padua, who arrived unexpectedly and took his place among the auditors of his friend. In the evening, the whole

population passed in front of the two bishops, who had taken up their quarters at the presbytery, and they talked of bygone days till night fell.

As is well known, the Italian Government grants or refuses at will its legal recognition to the bishops nominated by the Sovereign Pontiff. The *exequatur* reached Mgr. Sarto on the 26th of February 1885. A few days later he notified his nomination to the Mayor of Mantua. He was thus brought into contact officially with the civil power.

The wording of his letter and the ideas expressed in it, surely make it a model of courtesy and justness.

"Having just received from the Minister of ustice and Religious Worship the notice of the *exequatur* given to the Pontifical Bulls designating me Bishop of this important Diocese, I feel impelled, on becoming a citizen of Mantua, to offer my respects to your Excellency without delay, and to express the hope that I may count on the support of your authority in all emergencies, being only too conscious how inadequate is my strength for the high office that the Holy Father has seen fit to lay upon me. Without your concurrence I should be weighed down by the fear of being unable to do all for the welfare of the city and the diocese that they have a right to expect from their bishop. I am glad to have this oppor-

tunity of assuring your Excellency that while recognising the mission I have received from God, I recognise also the duty incumbent on me of entire submission to lawfully constituted authority, as the minister of a religion which has for its ensign the banner of peace, and for its law the law of charity.

" In virtue of my sacred office, and of my firm conviction that only where concord prevails can the priest exercise his influence, I protest to your Excellency that in my sphere of action I shall do all in my power to maintain peace and harmony, and be ready, were it necessary, to make any legitimate sacrifices to avoid the slightest disturbance.

" I assure you of my sincere regard, and look forward to the day when I shall be able to fulfil towards those I am proud to call my fellow-citizens and my children, the duties of a father and a friend. I feel confident not only that I may count on support in the exercise of my prerogatives as citizen and bishop, but that my mission will be rendered fruitful by the goodwill and assistance of all.

" While expressing these sentiments to your Excellency, I desire likewise to extend them to your colleagues in the municipal administration and to the members of the town council, and to

assure all that their new bishop, though he may be lacking in every other quality, has at heart no other ambition than to procure the salvation of souls, and unite all his people into one family as friends and brethren."

These words have an evangelical ring about them.

The pastoral letter also, which Mgr. Sarto addressed to the faithful of his diocese a few days later, could only have been written by one who had lived in intimacy with his Master from childhood, listened to His voice and grown like to Him. Ready-made formulas and quotations do not give this special sense of unction. It is felt only when another soul, whom we realise to be living and close beside us, allows us, in all simplicity, to see its unbounded confidence, and all-embracing charity, its humility, and that growing likeness to our Lord Jesus Christ—imperfect it may be but quite evident—which already draws our hearts, and which God asks from all Christians.

" For the good of souls," wrote Mgr. Sarto, " I shall spare neither trouble, nor time, nor fatigue for I have nothing so much at heart as your salvation. One or other of you may perchance ask who will give me the power to keep my promises. I reply :

" Hope—hope, the mainstay of my life, my unfailing strength in doubt, the strong support of

my weakness; hope—but not in man—hope in Christ, which, resting as it does on the Divine Word, is able to uphold the weakest of men by the strength and greatness of God. God refuses no grace to those who trust in Him; our power is in proportion to our hope, and through it we can do all we will:

"'I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me,' says the Apostle. God is possessed of infinite power, and shall I have less when I am supported by Him? He has infinite wisdom, and can I, abiding by His doctrine, err? He has infinite goodness, and can I, surrendered wholly to Him, be forsaken? His providence is infinite, and if I place myself in its keeping, will it not watch over me? O hope, hope, which unites me to God, and God to me. Being fully conscious of my insufficiency to bear the weight laid upon my shoulders, I find all my consolation in the beautiful virtue of hope."

Very few days remained before the date fixed for the bishop to enter his episcopal city. When would he be able to see his mother and relations, and the friends of his childhood?

He decided to spend Holy Week and Easter at Riese. It was, for his relations and for all the neighbourhood, the most delightful Easter they had ever spent.

The house on the road to Asolo was once more the scene of those family gatherings where the children, now grown up and living away from home, poured many things into the sympathetic ears of their mother and sisters. We can imagine to ourselves some of the things said on either side ; but among these there are only two of which a stranger can be certain. The whole neighbourhood knows them by heart. They tell how, when the bishop arrived, he held out his hand, and said :

" Look, mother, at my beautiful episcopal ring ! "

His mother looked at it, then, touching her wedding ring with her wrinkled fingers, she said :

" Yes, Giuseppe, it is a beauty, but you wouldn't have had it if I had not had this one ! "

Giuseppe Sarto of Riese returned quickly to Treviso. The time had come for him to take possession of his diocese. It was the last night ; the next day he must bid farewell to the nine years spent in the easy life of obedience.

He could not sleep. He felt he simply could not face the farewells next day, of all his friends at the seminary. He therefore wrote a letter, which he gave to the rector, Don Romanella, saying :

" Read it in the refectory when I am gone."

Then, without letting any one know, he ordered

a conveyance, which was to wait for him, not at the door of the house, but some distance away, in a place which could not be seen from the windows.

He went off alone, praying and offering up his pain. How touching are these moments of weakness in a great man, and how they add to his greatness !

At the station of Verona that day, the 18th of April, a deputation of clergy was awaiting the arrival of the train, to greet the bishop and travel the rest of the way with him.

When they reached Mantua it was seven o'clock in the evening. Every one was out and about ; all the bells of the city were pealing, the silvery chimes from the chapels mingling with the deep tones of the larger churches. Outside the station there were numbers of empty carriages waiting. Every one of any standing in the town had sent his own to swell the train. Mgr. Sarto got into one belonging to the Senator di Bango.

Followed by a long line of carriages, greeted on all sides by shouts of acclamation, he passed through the city till they reached the cathedral, which is next door to the episcopal palace. In front of the palace, in the Piazza San Pietro, a great crowd had collected. Cries were heard : " We want to see the bishop ! " He was obliged to show himself from the balcony like a sovereign

already, and to bless his people, who felt they had a friend in him.

He was, in truth a friend, who had come to the help of a sick diocese. The seminary of Mantua had but few ecclesiastical students ; its resources were quite insufficient to supply proper salaries for the professors ; several parishes were without priests ; some priests were wanting in zeal ; modern erroneous opinions, and especially those of Rosmini, found supporters among the clergy ; moreover, a certain section among the people were socialists.

The lengthy task, difficult and obscure, undertaken by Mgr. Sarto was to restore to the diocese discipline, courage, and unity, all of which were on the wane. To succeed in this he needed far more than what are called administrative qualities. These are insufficient where souls are in question ; what he needed, and what he indeed possessed, was a great and supernatural soul, able to lead the way by example and by authority. As regards work, he kept the same habits as at Treviso ; he rose before five, retired to rest at midnight and scarcely ever went out. But now a fresh duty increased his burden, for as soon as Mgr. Sarto became, so to speak, a public character, he was ready to receive any visitor who called. He had no special days or hours for seeing people. As

some one remarked : " His house was open to the rich, and wide open to the poor." No one will for a moment imagine that he had any prejudice against the former, for this would be contrary to justice ; but he knew by experience that the poor man, having fewer friends, is all the more rejoiced to find one.

It often happened that he would open the door himself, though he might well have said : " What luck, I'll keep quiet, and the visitor is sure to go away ! "

The present Pope, Pius XI, quite recently told the following anecdote to a nephew of Pope Sarto. One morning early, the Bishop of Mantua was bending over his desk, hard at work, when he heard a voice saying : " May I come in ? "

He went at once to the door, and received the apologies of a young *monsignore*, who had found nobody to announce him. The name of the visitor was Mgr. Achille Ratti, and he had come to Mantua to visit the library.

" Have you said Mass, monsignore ? " asked the bishop.

" Yes, I said it at the cathedral."

" Then may I offer you a cup of coffee ? "

The bishop went out of his study ; he called for Maria, he called for Anna, he called for Rosa, but in vain ; his sisters were all in church.

" It doesn't matter," said the bishop : " come downstairs with me."

They went down together into the kitchen, and the future Pius X himself prepared breakfast for him who, a little later, was to become Pius XI.

Mgr. Sarto had to arouse the spirit of zeal, and start numerous institutions in the Diocese of Mantua. Three months after his arrival he announced to the clergy and the faithful that he intended to visit every parish, and he begged his diocesans not to prepare grand receptions for him, with processions and flower-strewn ways, but, if he came to a village in the morning, to gather together in church, there to pray with him and to receive Holy Communion.

" It will be the best welcome you can give me," he said ; " and what will give me real pleasure will be to see the sincerity of your hearts, and your friendly and reverential attitude in the presence of one who comes to bring you the blessing of God."

On more than one occasion he was known to put on a surplice and, taking his seat in a confessional, to hear the confessions of the parishioners there assembled, so as to help the parish priest and to prepare a greater number for Holy Communion.

By this very means, this simplicity, which spoke so straight to the hearts of the people, he would

sometimes give a silent lesson to priests who were wanting in zeal. We are told that in one parish, where the priest was in the habit of rising somewhat late, the bishop, on one of his pastoral visits, arriving at an early hour, as was his custom, went straight to the church, and found some of the parishioners waiting to go to confession. He took his place in the confessional and began to receive their confidences, to exhort and absolve them. In course of time, the parish priest made his appearance, and being astonished to see a stranger occupying his place, hastily opened the door, and found himself face to face with the Bishop of the Diocese !

Knowing the poverty of his priests, Mgr. Sarto took every precaution to prevent his visitations being any burden on them. He told them not to put themselves to any extra expense as to meals, to do nothing out of the ordinary ; but he pressed them, on the other hand, to start schools. During his stay he would gather the children together, question them, and give catechism classes. He was often asked to visit the sick, and the onlookers were struck by the air of authority with which he commanded those who seemed in danger of death, to live.

As an instance of this, *Avvocato* Broli in his *Poverello d'Assisi* relates that Mgr. Sarto, having

come to Castiglione delle Stiviere, the country of St. Aloysius (it will be remembered that the Prince of Gonzaga was Marquis of Castiglione), was taken to the house of the bursar of the college where he had dined.

There, lying in a cot, was a little boy of three, ill with typhoid fever, whose parents were broken-hearted at the thought of losing him.

The bishop went up to the cot, and said to the father : " He won't die, Luigi ; no, he won't die." Then after blessing the child, he withdrew.

The child did indeed recover, and though nothing was said about a miracle, yet many must have reflected, as in other like circumstances in the life of Pius X, that there are not only sorrowful but also joyful mysteries in the world.

From the very beginning of his episcopate, Mgr. Sarto had announced to his priests that he intended to hold a Diocesan Synod, as prescribed by the Council of Trent. For over 239 years this tradition had fallen into oblivion in the diocese.

In the month of September, therefore, in 1888, two hundred priests assembled in the Cathedral of Mantua, and for three days, under the presidency of the bishop, the Synod deliberated and drew up resolutions on a great number of points :

The obligation of giving religious instruction in

every parish on all feast days, with the exception of nine ;

The obligation, during Lent and Advent, of giving daily instruction to children, with a view to preparing them for confession and communion ;

Regulations concerning the communions of children, betrothals, marriages, funerals, the hours of Mass, the Gregorian Chant, antique objects such as pictures, vases, or sculpture, which priests were forbidden to sell under penalty of suspension, etc.

The delicate and compassionate charity of the Bishop of Mantua inspired him with such resolutions as the following, which was taken in the general assembly of the clergy : At the funerals of the poor the priest was to say one Mass, the stipend of which, should he be poor himself, was to be taken out of the alms for the Holy Souls ; he was also to provide two candles, which were to burn throughout the service.

Both in the meetings of the Synod and in the talks he had with priests and laity during his pastoral visitations, the bishop would say continually :

" I want you to love your seminary at Mantua ! Support it by your prayers and alms ! Ask that vocations may increase among the young, for the life of souls depends on it ! "

The long letter that he addressed to his people

on this subject on the 7th of July 1885 was full of these yearnings of a Father's heart. He said to the poor :

" After God, it is chiefly in you, the poor of my diocese, that I place my hopes ! Do not take alarm, I am not going to ask for impossibilities, but only for what you have—a loving heart. I know you have little money to spare, but there are many of you ; and many grains of corn make a heap—many drops of water make rain, many notes of music a pleasing harmony. There is no one who cannot give one centime, one fruit, one vegetable for the seminary.

" To the rich he said : ' Formerly, well-to-do families held it an honour to give one of their sons to the service of the sanctuary ; nowadays, if God makes His voice to be heard only in the homes of the poor, as in the days when He took His Apostles from the fishing-boat and the nets, which of you is there who, for the preservation of the faith, will not rejoice to give at least something of the goods which God has lavished upon you ? ' "

But true zeal does not rest satisfied with letter-writing and speeches, it demands the gift of self ; and so nearly every evening saw Mgr. Sarto at the seminary, where he would look into everything. This same year he was present at the examinations ; a few days later he gave away the

prizes to the ecclesiastical students in one of the rooms of his palace, which he had had decorated, inviting to the ceremony their professors, the clergy, and a great number of the inhabitants of Mantua.

Before very long his efforts were rewarded, and the number of seminarists increased. The seminary was in no way rich, but henceforth, when a young man came to Mgr. Sarto and said :

" We are very poor at home, and I am only able to pay a small part of the fees, but I want to be a priest ; can you receive me ? " The bishop was able to reply :

" Yes, dear lad, *figliuolo mio*," and his heart was glad with a joy deeper than that of earth.

The first general visitation of the diocese came to an end in 1888. In the following May, Mgr. Sarto was preparing for the second. To those who suggested :

" Won't it be too much for you ? " he replied :

" Hard work is part of a priest's life, the two terms are synonymous." And he added :

" If through ill-health I ever become incapable of doing my duty, I pray God in His mercy to call me to Himself."

The difficulty of promoting well-doing, which is perennial, and the audacious onslaughts of evil, which stand out at certain periods and in our own

times as well, are enough to explain the expression of sadness which was sometimes seen on the countenance of Mgr. Sarto.

Although of a naturally cheerful disposition, yet his clear-sightedness and the realisation of his responsibility over a whole people made it impossible for him not to take account of the multitudes who were too blind to see the outstretched Hand of Christ, and were wandering in their heedlessness or hatred, far out of the road to heaven. The charity of Christ had wounded the soul of this good shepherd. The welcome that he received from Leo XIII, whom he went to visit at the end of 1889, reanimated his courage ; but Rome itself, in this latter part of the nineteenth century, saddened him, and a few days before being received in audience by the Pope, he wrote to his old friend, Jacuzzi :

" Even here there is little comfort to be found ; we hear nothing but lamentations, and everywhere hell seems to be working for all it is worth to paganise this poor city, till I feel a kind of longing to get back quickly to Mantua."

In spite of himself, his reputation was growing. He was asked to preach at Brescia, Genoa, and other great cities. Men appreciated the power he had of giving himself when he spoke, and that innate compassion of his for the poor world. For

instance, during the course of one of his pastoral visitations, he was told in a certain village that 305 of the inhabitants were going to emigrate to America, on account of the difficulty of finding work at home, attracted by the idea of making their fortune in a foreign land. At this news his heart was pierced with sorrow.

To lose his children, to see them risk their happiness in what might prove to be only an adventure! When he had finished the religious instruction which according to custom he was giving to the parish, knowing that he had among his audience some whose poverty was driving them from home, and who would in all probability never return to their native land, he wished to bid them farewell. He must have been well aware that the Government of that day had not made all the attempts it ought, to keep so many workers on Italian soil, so many families in the city, so many souls in the churches of Italy, and he did not hide his regret that there was this movement towards emigration and little or nothing done to prevent it: but with what moderation did this minister of Christ point out the neglect or the error of Cæsar!

"My beloved children," he said, "it is not for me to judge whether our country is among those where there are more mouths to feed than means

of subsistence, or too many hands for the work that has to be done; but whatever may be the opinion of others on this matter, I, as the Father of your souls, cannot but grieve over the departure of so many of my children for countries where they will find but rarely and with difficulty those helps to religion which, thank God, are not yet wanting to us here. To leave the church in which you became Christians, where you have learnt to pray, where you received your First Communion, in which you have assisted at so many feasts of our Lord, and to go to a country in which you will hardly ever meet with these precious helps, where, perhaps, once in a year, you may come across a priest, and be able to hear Mass. Oh, it is impossible, at such thoughts as these, not to feel one's soul torn with sorrow, grief and compassion!

"I implore you, my children, to preserve that faith which you have received in holy baptism, to practise your religion, and to seek those means of grace, even if you can only do so at rare intervals, which alone can alleviate the trials of life and make them bearable. Before you leave, I beg of you to go to your parish priest, who, besides any recommendations or parting gifts he may make or receive from you, will give you a copy of the Diocesan Catechism, some book of devotion, and the certificates necessary to identify you as

Christians and Catholics. And may the blessing of God be with you always and everywhere ! "

Expressions of sorrow were not enough for him : he tried to stay the tide of emigration, which would be the ruin of so many souls and of the country. In a letter, written a short time after the event we have just described, he recommended his priests earnestly to warn their parishioners of so many possible dangers, to put them on their guard against the snares and designs of emigration agents, and to advise them at least to postpone their departure.

" Do not let yourselves be hindered from this by any fear of damping their enthusiasm, or of arousing hostility against yourselves. Truth makes enemies ; and if it is at all times a noble act to bear witness to it, how much more in a case such as this, where the salvation of souls is at stake."

Let us lay hold of these words : *nothing must stand in the way, when the salvation of souls is at stake ;* for they mark a salient feature in the character of Giuseppe Sarto. They are the accents of charity, and we recognise them as such. For charity is love ; and love is stronger than all else. When the object beloved is something surpassingly beautiful—as truth or immortal souls—and when, without counting the cost or advertising herself, charity fearlessly defends it, putting all

her trust in that God from Whom she sprang, we may perceive the image of a Divine perfection made manifest in a man.

As Bishop of Mantua, in other more memorable circumstances, Mgr. Sarto evinced the same simple courage in his charity. An ordinary spirit might at times have been intimidated and silenced, or have complained. His, on the contrary, rose up and declared itself against the evil. When, for instance, the Italian Parliament was possessed with the determination to bring in two projects forming part of the international revolutionary programme—one of which forbade the celebration of the *religious*, before the State had ratified what is called the *civil*, marriage, while the other aimed at introducing divorce into Italy—Mgr. Sarto summoned the members of the Diocesan Committee to his palace, and spoke to them in the strongest terms of the outrage that such laws would commit against the teaching of the Gospel, as well as against morals, the family and the nation. Again, on the 14th of March, the birthday of King Humbert, it was customary for both the military and civil authorities to be present at the singing of the *Te Deum* in the cathedral.

Signor Crispi's Government, always on the lookout for anything derogatory to the Church, had allowed these functionaries to go straight from

there to attend another ceremony, with the same object in view, at the synagogue. They forgot that the Catholic religion alone was the State religion in Italy ; their action lowered it in the eyes of the people, letting it appear as though the honour due to truth could be divided : it was, therefore, with solemnity, with the accompaniment of music, uniforms, processions, and the authority of the Government, causing scandal to souls. Mgr. Sarto, as was his custom, took time to reflect.

A few days before the 14th of March, he had formed his determination. He sent word to the authorities that if it was their intention to follow the recent custom, and to go from a Christian Church to the synagogue, he would find himself under the painful obligation of not receiving them in the cathedral.

The effect produced by this declaration on the official world may be imagined : the insults of the so-called Liberal papers, the wise reflections of the prudent, who consider that moderation is invariably a virtue, and always expect Almighty God to pay the costs of this moderation. Signor Crispi, who was consulted at once, replied that the officials would not be present at either of the religious ceremonies, a decision which seemed hardly conformable to the feelings of the Italian

nation, nor to what was intended in making the arrangements for the celebration of the King's Birthday. As we have shown, Mgr. Sarto only determined on actions of this kind after ripe deliberation, and when they were demanded by the respect the Christian owes to his faith and the charity he owes to souls. Whether Bishop, Cardinal or Pope, it always cost him much to be severe.

Giuseppe Sarto had been made a Roman Count by Leo XIII. We do not know when this took place. In looking through the collection of Pastoral Letters of the Bishop of Mantua, we came across two, one for Christmas, dated the 20th of December 1892, the other for the following Lent, dated the 29th of January 1893, at the beginning of which are the following titles :

" Giuseppe Sarto, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop of Mantua,

" Domestic Prelate of His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII,

" Assistant at the Pontifical Throne and Roman Count,

" To the venerable clergy and well-beloved people of the city and Diocese of Mantua, health and benediction."

But of this title of Roman nobility, which he was bound to use at least once or twice, we have

found no further trace throughout the long life of Mgr. Sarto.

Amongst other events which belong to this period of his episcopate, there is one which was found in the *Gazette de Ferrare* of the 11th of July 1923, by one of the biographers of Pius X, P. Benedetto Pierami, who was actually the postulator for the cause of beatification. It is too perfect to be omitted :

A business man living in Mantua had written—needless to say, without giving his name—a book full of invectives against his bishop. It was not long before the bishop discovered who the author was, and he began at once to pray for him. To those who advised him to prosecute, he replied :

" The poor man needs prayers rather than punishment." Some time elapsed, and the man was suddenly brought to the brink of ruin. He was hemmed in by creditors ; bankruptcy stared him in the face ; they wanted to prove that he had been acting fraudulently, although it appears that he had not actually infringed the laws of professional probity. All seemed lost, when some one, anonymous, too, repaired the evil ; the Bishop of Mantua sent for a charitable old lady and said to her : " You see, he is much to be pitied ; one can't think of him in any other way. Go and find his wife, and take her this."

As he spoke, he took out of the drawer of his writing-table the large sum that was needed, and put it into an envelope.

" And above all," he added, " do not let them know that it was I who sent you. If they are very insistent, you can say that the person who has collected this amount is the most compassionate of all women—Our Lady of Perpetual Succour."

When a man is thus oblivious of insults and of his own glory, and thinks only of the glory of God, we can understand why God lays still greater responsibilities and burdens upon him.

Mgr. Giuseppe was soon to become Patriarch of Venice and Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church.

CHAPTER VII

PATRIARCH OF VENICE

THE Patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Agostini, died on the 31st of December 1891.

Leo XIII thought at first of making the old Bishop of Treviso, Mgr. Apollonio, his successor, but he put forward such serious objections on the score of health that the Pope was finally induced to abandon the project. Some months passed. On the 23rd of May 1893 the *Voce della Verita* announced that in the approaching Consistory Mgr. Sarto was to be made Patriarch of Venice. A few days later, the papers added that in the same Consistory, which was to take place on the 12th of June, the Patriarch would be raised to the Cardinalate. After having done his utmost to escape from these burdensome honours, Mgr. Sarto consented to become Patriarch and Cardinal, on hearing from the Secretary of State that a further refusal would cause great displeasure to the Pope.

The 7th of June saw him at Rome. Leo XIII

bestowed on him singular marks of affection such as he seldom lavished on any one, and spoke words peculiarly flattering, coming from one in his high position. The exact phraseology has been lost, but the substance of what he said belongs to the lives of both these great men :

" I wish to make the Bishop of Mantua a Cardinal, and if my Canonists see no objection, I want you to keep the title of Bishop of Mantua till you take possession of the See of Venice, that it may be seen that the Cardinalate is not so much the appanage of your new dignity as a personal reward which We are bestowing upon yourself."

In the Consistory, therefore, Mgr. Sarto, Bishop of Mantua, was proclaimed Cardinal-Priest, and three days later only, was he preconised as Patriarch of Venice. His title as Cardinal was that of San Bernardo alle Terme.

Some other bishops received the purple at the same time as Mgr. Sarto, among whom were two Frenchmen, Mgr. Lécot, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and Mgr. Bourret, Bishop of Rodez.

Opposition was raised at once by Signor Crispi. The minister refused the *exequatur* for the nomination of the Patriarch. He claimed for the Italian

Government the right of nomination, in virtue of the privilege formerly granted by the Roman Pontiffs to the Most Serene Republic of Venice. The Vatican replied by proving that these ancient privileges had fallen into disuse. Besides, there was no longer any reason for their existence. The municipality of Venice, composed for the most part of men hostile to the Church, seem to have taken no pains to bring this undesirable state of affairs to an issue, though it left the diocese without a bishop. For sixteen months longer the Patriarch was to be kept from taking up his office, during which time the Italian Government would appropriate the episcopal revenues.

After his visits had come to an end—and the impression left by them on the people of Rome was not easily to be effaced—the Cardinal hastened back to Mantua. On the 23rd he was received there with great solemnity. During the summer, there were a great many other festivals in Venetia and Lombardy which he had to attend ; for the newly-elected Patriarch was continually asked to preside at religious ceremonies, and he would go to them with all the bells pealing. At last, on the 14th of October, he was free to go and visit his mother, good Margherita Sarto, now old and bedridden, who had not been able to come and

greet her son invested with his new dignity. He left Mantua by a train reaching Castelfranco the same evening. News of his coming had preceded him. People set out on foot to the nearest stations. When the train arrived at Cittadella, he found on the platform a crowd of men, women and children from Tombolo, who hailed their former priest with shouts of joy: "Don Giuseppe! Don Giuseppe!"—as they still called him. At Castelfranco the representatives of the Bishop of Treviso and numberless other people were waiting to greet the Prelate; and he recalled the time when, on foot, with his shoes slung over his shoulder, he used to come to Castelfranco for the classes at the *ginnasio*. He got into a carriage and drove along the well-known road under the plane trees—grown much thicker by then. At the gates of farms and at the cross-roads there were many faces that he knew, and many young people whom he did not recognise, who would cry out:

"I am the daughter of your friend Bartolomeo; give me your blessing!"

Or, "I am the son of Andrea, your schoolfellow: God keep you!"

The welcome he received at Riese, when he alighted in front of the church, can be imagined.

After Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Giuseppe Sarto, forced once more to get into the carriage, was driven, amid ceaseless cheers, from the church of Riese to the little house where Margherita, now eighty years of age, awaited the arrival of her eldest son. She knew his step on the stairs and heard his voice ; then she saw him, as he came to her bedside and bent down to kiss his mother. I am sure they had a long talk in that poor little room, where she had been when young, and he had lived as a child.

The next day, which was a Sunday, was given up entirely to the people. The Patriarch celebrated Mass, and spoke to them after the Gospel, moving many to tears, for he spoke of old times and of those he had known in the past. All that day he was surrounded by his friends, and went on without ceasing—receiving, blessing, and thanking them. Crowds came from all the country round. Riese was decorated with triumphal arches ; and in the evening all the walls and windows had Venetian lanterns ; the joyous sounds of a whole village keeping festival did not cease till far into the night.

But on the third day, early in the morning, Giuseppe put on, to please his mother, who had asked for it, the scarlet *cappa magna* ; round his neck he placed the gold cross and chain, and went

up to Margherita Sanson, who was completely overwhelmed at the sight, though whether joy or bewilderment was uppermost would be hard to say.

Not, in any case, joy proceeding from a spirit of pride, for that would have been out of place in the heart of so Christian a mother. Her soul, like her son's, dwelt above the things of earth. That had always been the example and teaching she had given to her Giuseppe, now risen so high in the hierarchy of Holy Church. She gave thanks, and in her heart, stored with the teaching of the Gospel, she reflected that there remained little time before she would go to her heavenly home, and that probably she would never again see this child of benediction. This moment, like many others, was for them both sweet and bitter. Then the Cardinal went off to celebrate Mass in the sanctuary *delle Cendrole*, in the dear familiar country, where a crowd of pilgrims were awaiting him.

Their unspoken presentiments had not deceived them. Giuseppe's mother did not long survive their meeting. She died, after a short illness, very peacefully on Candlemas day 1894. And those who visit the cemetery of Riese may read this inscription inside a chapel built of white stone and brick :

+ " MARGHERITA SANSON +
+ EXEMPLARY IN HER LIFE. +
+ A FAITHFUL WIFE +
+ AN INCOMPARABLE MOTHER +
+ ON MAY 4TH 1852 +
+ HAVING LOST HER HUSBAND +
+ GIOVANNI BATTISTA SARTO +
+ THROUGH DAYS OF SORROW AS OF JOY +
+ ALWAYS RESIGNED AND CALM +
+ AFTER HAVING MANFULLY +
+ BROUGHT UP NINE CHILDREN +
+ IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION +
+ ON THE 2ND OF FEBRUARY 1894 +
+ IN HER 81ST YEAR +
+ CONSUMMATED BY THE DEATH OF THE JUST +
+ A LIFE OF LABOUR AND SACRIFICE " +

And following this are a few more lines :

+ " FOR THEIR BELOVED PARENTS +
+ CARDINAL GIUSEPPE SARTO +
+ TOGETHER WITH HIS BROTHER AND SISTERS +
+ ASKS +
+ ETERNAL PEACE " +

Time passed by : the Patriarch of Venice was still at Mantua : the legal *exequatur* signed by the minister had not been sent. Reiterated complaints, consultations on the part of the most renowned

jurisconsults, who affirmed that the right of patronage by the State did not exist for the See of St. Mark, letters addressed by eminent persons to politicians, a big popular demonstration in the palace *dei Mercanti* at Venice ; nothing seemed to move Francesco Crispi. When questioned in Parliament, the President of the Council had dared to say that " he had no desire to contend with any one, and that he respected the Catholic Church, the religion of the great majority of Italians."

For nearly three years the Diocese of Venice had been without a bishop, when suddenly, on the 5th of September 1894, the *exequatur* was given to the long-outstanding Pontifical Bull for the nomination of the Patriarch.

The newspapers, as is their custom, brought forward a pretext for this in the fact that Leo XIII had raised Eritrea, an Italian colony, to the dignity of a prefecture apostolic, and given leave to Italian Franciscans to settle there in place of French ; wherefore, the minister, in recognition of this friendly act of the Holy See, and without conceding anything, had acquiesced in the nomination of Mgr. Sarto. Other things were also whispered—notably, that the character of the new patriarch was " very conciliatory."

What is spoken of as conciliation, in such circumstances, often deserves another name and

arouses just indignation. The Cardinal felt the insult. This child of the people was proud—proud of the Church. He suffered no doubts to be entertained on this matter, and in his first pastoral letter, dated on the Feast of St. Lawrence Justinian, Bishop of Venice (5th of September), he wrote as follows to the faithful of his new diocese :

" God is driven from politics by the theory of the separation of Church and State ; from science by the establishment of doubt as a system ; from art lowered through realism ; from the laws, modelled according to the notions of flesh and blood ; from the schools, by the abolition of the Catechism ; finally, from the family, by the attempt to secularise it in its origin and deprive it of sacramental grace . . . "

How to remedy evils so great ? The letter indicates the means :

" The capital crime of modern times, which claims sacrilegiously to substitute man for God, must be combated ; the light of the Commandments, the evangelical counsels, and of the Church's institutions must be brought to bear upon all those problems which have been so clearly and triumphantly resolved by the Gospel and the Church—education, the family, property, rights and obligations ; Christian concord must be re-established between the different social

grades; earth must be pacified and heaven peopled: this is the mission I am called to carry out amongst you, submitting everything to the authority of God, of Jesus Christ, and of the Pope, His Vicar on earth."

When the Patriarch of Venice meets with the name of the Pope, he reverently salutes it; he magnifies it, thinking that, perhaps at that very moment, Leo XIII, Commander-in-Chief for this world of the eternal warfare, was being attacked within and without.

" When there is a question of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, it is not the time to examine, but to obey; we must never mete out the extent of the order given, so as to limit the obedience we owe to him; we must not carp at his clear meaning in order to disguise it; we must not interpret the will of the Pope by popular prejudice and thus destroy its evident substance; we must not bring forward other rights against the right of the Pope to teach and to command; nor must we weigh his judgments, or discuss his orders, unless we wish to offer a direct affront to our Divine Lord Himself. . . . The whole body of society is sick; all its most noble parts are affected, the very sources of life are tainted. The one refuge, the one remedy is in the Pope."

In this wonderful letter written at the beginning

of his Patriarchate, he said, moreover, addressing himself to the clergy :

" Let priests be on their guard against accepting any doctrines of that Liberalism which under pretext of good, aims at effecting a reconciliation between right and wrong. . . . Liberal Catholics are wolves in sheep's clothing ; and therefore the true priest is bound to unmask them, and to disclose to the people entrusted to his care their dangerous snares and evil designs. Men will accuse you of clericalism, and you will be called paptists, retrogrades, intransigents . . . Be proud of it ! . . . Be strong, and obey the command recorded by Isaias :

" ' *Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their wicked doings and the House of Jacob their sins.*' "

Even before he took possession of his patriarchate, the Cardinal left no doubt as to the principles by which he would be guided in the spiritual direction of his people. At the same time he wished to give the civil authorities an assurance of the spirit of concord they would find in him.

" Most honoured sir," he wrote to the Syndic of Venice, on the 14th of November, " the day is drawing near on which I am to assume the government of the archdiocese, and I consider it a duty to express my respect both towards yourself and

towards your honourable colleagues in the municipality."

He touches on the hope he has of finding, in the representatives of the city, that support which will lighten his episcopal charge.

" I feel confident of this, for however distinct may be our fields of action, we are both aiming at the same end—the good of the citizens—and there can be no collision between the two powers, since religion and society have the self-same author."

The head of the Radical municipality wrote a most courteous letter in reply.

Ten days later, the patriarch made his solemn entry into Venice. The crowds were so enormous in the streets round the station, in the little side streets close at hand, and in those opposite, that everyone was afraid of the least movement, which would have precipitated whole groups of sight-seers into the Grand Canal. On the Grand Canal there were hundreds of gondolas and small steamboats. The train whistled, and at this signal all the bells of Venice—and God knows their number !—began to peal. The sky, the houses and the sea were singing their welcome. Men were silent as yet. They were watching, as it advanced towards the stone steps, a launch belonging to the Royal Navy, in which were several officers in full uniform.

This was the first welcome of the Government. Then the gate of the station was opened, and the Cardinal came down through the crowd. A great cry of acclamation arose, and was renewed again and again, each time the first boat in the procession reached a new quarter, all along the route till they arrived at the Piazzetta. The patriarch was standing at the prow of the boat, in his purple, smiling and blessing the people ; on his right was the cross, carried by a priest ; on his left, his vicar-general ; close by, the officers of the Royal Navy. All the palaces were decorated, except that of the municipality ; all the windows, the parapets of bridges, and the balconies, with their hangings, streamers and flags, and the people waving, took part in the long-looked-for festival. It took a long time to cross the Piazzetta, where they landed, and the Piazza of St. Mark ; the procession skirted the Palace of the Doges, passing by the famous Basilica, and stopped at the farther side when the Cardinal had entered the Patriarchal Palace.

Some official receptions then took place : the patriarch received Admiral Canevaro, the President of the Court of Appeal, the King's Procurator, the military authorities, and lastly the Mayor of Venice. Then night fell ; the next day dawned ; the pigeons were pleased to find a few empty

spaces on the pavement where they could settle, and his life in Venice had begun for the patriarch, still taken up, however, for the next week, with his official duties. He returned visits and received them, among others those of twenty foreign consuls residing at Venice, with whom he conversed on a subject of general interest to all: Italian emigration. In the difficult position which is always created when a new chief comes into office, men took special note of the tact displayed by Cardinal Sarto, his ready repartee, the gift he had of carrying on a conversation, his easy manner, his knowledge of the world, and the equilibrium of so many varied qualities which served to enhance his virtue. The Palace of the Patriarch of Venice is to the left of the "Golden Basilica," standing back a little, a large square building, covered with white marble, and built about the year 1850. It has imposing neighbours, which rather put it in the shade. A small square, the continuation of that of St. Mark, opens out in front of it, and there are three steps leading up to the door. Inside, an absence of hangings, paintings and costly furniture; large reception rooms, and, for living in, a number of unassuming apartments. Cardinal Sarto would have been content with much less. His sisters had come with him; they did the cooking—just the same as it had been at

Riese ; they wore no hats when they went out, but covered their heads with a mantilla or a piece of dark material like the other Venetian women who were seen in the squares and churches, along the canals, the wives of fishermen or tradesmen.

Neither did the Patriarch change anything, of his own choice, in the rule of life he had traced for himself when he first became a priest. He still rose at five and retired to rest at midnight ; only his work had increased, he had more relations with the outside world and the obligation of being present at religious solemnities. Every day the Cardinal received visitors from ten to half-past twelve. Sometimes it happened at Venice also, that he would go down and open the door himself. Then he would say :

" Have you come to see the patriarch ? Saving your honour, I am he."

He was even known to add :

" I am nothing but a poor country Cardinal."

And the Venetians, who are a quick-witted race, would smile as they listened. Visitors were shown into the large room on the first floor, which looks on to the Piazzetta dei Leoncini and one side of the big white square of St. Mark ; thence they passed into the large reception room where the Cardinal was awaiting them. When he had finished receiving his visitors, he would withdraw into a small

office close at hand, and sit down at his writing-table ; for he had an enormous correspondence, and he wrote as many letters as possible with his own hand, although he was helped by his Secretary, Mgr. Bressan, and by Don Pescini.

At Venice, as elsewhere and perhaps more than elsewhere, people flocked to hear him, for he spoke in the Venetian dialect words pregnant with life and feeling. Before long he was known, loved and greeted by all. For the most part, when he went to visit a hospital, a refuge, or a convent, he would go on foot, and stop to talk with the " people of the sea " who had adopted him. The revenues of the patriarchate, not more than some 12,000 francs, would never have sufficed for the alms of a patriarch from whom every one begged, and who was always ready to give.

He used sometimes to lament to Mgr. Bressan, who, at the beginning of each month, would hand over to him what he considered an adequate sum. The first day, and the second, and even the third, it was all right ; but in less than a week, the purse for the poor was empty. What was to be done ? Spend as little as possible on himself. The Venetians noticed, on more than one occasion, that Cardinal Sarto's *cappa magna* did not seem to be all of the same shade. That might well be ! They did not know that it had belonged to his

predecessor, and had been turned and done up as cleverly as could be. But renovations are not the same as freshness !

As a schoolboy, seminarist, curate, parish priest, and bishop, Giuseppe Sarto had always been poor ; he could not be otherwise in the See of St. Mark. If some eminent ecclesiastic was passing through Venice and had to be received, hospitality demanded that there should be better and more abundant fare, and the guest, delighted with the courtly reception always to be met with in Mgr. Sarto, had no suspicion of the great simplicity in which he really lived. The very priests of the diocese who were sometimes asked in, were probably under the same illusion, for the sisters' ingenuity always kept some provisions in reserve. The patriarchal residence in the Piazzetta dei Leoncini had probably never known less opulence. Beyond his pastoral ring and cross, and his gold watch—which he is said to have pawned from time to time—the Cardinal possessed only one object of real value—this was a gondola given him by the Catholics of Venice, black, of course, according to tradition, but a very good one, beautifully finished, and armed at the prow with an iron blade ; built by Casal, sculptured by a specialist, Besarel, it was manned by a gondolier whose name brings back the antique horses of

gold on the façade of San Marco, for he was called Cavaldoro ! However, the Cardinal made sparse use of the gondola, except to reach distant places, or when, on summer mornings, he was going to the Lido for a walk with Mgr. Bressan.

During the nine years that he was patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Sarto adhered to the same rules of kind and firm government which he had followed at Mantua. The day following that on which he had assumed his new charge, he was harangued in Latin before an immense crowd gathered in the Basilica of San Marco, by one of his former professors at Padua. In his reply, he began to speak in Latin, gracefully and easily, then changing into Italian, he thus continued :

" I ought to be confounded by such manifestations of joy and respect, and by the honours of which I have been the object. But I know that all these tokens of respect and honour are addressed not to my poor person, but to our Divine Lord, the true Legislator and King, in Whose Name I have come amongst you. . . . But, oh ! what would become of me if I did not love you. I bear you all in my heart, even those I have never seen—parish priests, clergy, magistrates, the rich and noble, children of the people, the poor ; all are my family, all possess my heart and my love, and I desire in return only your affection. I want

you to be able to say from your hearts: 'Our patriarch is a man of right intention, who will have no half-measures; he holds aloft the stainless banner of Christ's Vicar, and seeks nothing else but to uphold and defend the truth and to promote justice.'

"And may God grant that I may rather die than ever fail in this purpose which I have set solemnly before you here."

He recommended his priests to preach less and to give more instructions on Christian doctrine, for, he said, sermons assume that the hearers are well instructed; he made them explain the catechism—not only to children, but also to well-intentioned adults—and to choose for their instructions a convenient hour in the afternoon; he paid particular attention to the conduct of the clergy, recommending them not to take in papers in any way opposed to the spirit of the Church, to support the Catholic Press, in accordance with the oft-repeated injunctions of Leo XIII, and in the Catholic press, the local papers, "for there will be found the immediate remedy for anything amongst our people contrary to faith or morals"; he stringently forbade his clergy to go to the theatre, under pain of suspension *ipso facto*.

As at Mantua, his seminary was the object of his constant and almost daily solicitude. He saw

to it that the teaching was of the best, questioned the seminarists, got to know them, helped them from his own private means and instituted for them a Faculty of Canon Law, authorised by the Pope, which empowered the professorial staff to confer the Degrees of Bachelor, Licentiate, and Doctor. Besides all this, the Cardinal established, either at the seminary or at the patriarchal palace, monthly lectures on theology, biblical science, ecclesiastical history and social economy, at which he himself presided, and to which not only the clergy but also the educated laity were invited. For his seminarists, also, he organised the solemn Procession of the Blessed Sacrament in the seminary gardens, and he always took part in it. In the autumn of 1894, indignant at the war declared against Christ on the part of the Italian Freemasons, and at the many sacrileges at that time committed against the Most Holy Sacrament, he took advantage of the meeting at Venice of the bishops of the province to prepare a manifestation of faith and reparation towards our Divine Redeemer. The clergy, both regular and secular, religious sodalities, the Venetian aristocracy, tradespeople, workmen belonging to Catholic Guilds, sailors, each one according to his power responded to the appeal, and the nineteenth Eucharistic Congress opened on the 8th of August 1897, in the Church of

Ss. John and Paul, one of the finest in Venice and the biggest, after San Marco. Four cardinals, twenty-eight bishops, besides a very large number of priests and of the faithful, attended the meetings, which were held one after the other for four days. Don Perosi, appointed by the patriarch head of the *Schola Cantorum*, directed the singing, and produced, for the first time, part of his Trilogy of the Passion. At the close of the Congress, a Eucharistic Exhibition was opened in the rooms belonging to the Confraternity of St. Rock, enriched with so many famous paintings by Tintoretto. The Cardinal had collected all sorts of precious objects, carved, woven or designed by Venetian artists, in honour of the Blessed Sacrament : monstrances, ciboriums, chalices, cloth of gold, velvets and silks, banners and standards, antique lace. More than ten centuries of art were there represented, all singing the same praises. When Mgr. Sarto opened this Exhibition, surrounded as he was by bishops, the Syndic, members of the municipality and the Government, by all the chief personages of Venice, he was able to say to this assembly, soon to be followed by crowds of the people :

" What you are admiring here has not been brought from far away, but collected at Venice, and from the parts formerly governed by your

glorious republic, under the proud and noble protection of the Lion of St. Mark the Apostle. . . . And, in truth, this Exhibition proves in stronger terms than the most eloquent discourses, how great, powerful and glorious were our forefathers because they always made religion the basis of their institutions. They never returned from a victory without bringing back to Venice some token of their faith, some proof of their devotion towards the Eucharist, or raising some monument in its honour. . . ."

Those were days of wonderful festivity. During the Congress the Cardinal had five hundred poor people invited to dinner.

After the last session he arranged for the Blessing of the city and the sea, as in the time of the Doges and under the holy Bishop, St. Lawrence Justinian. Accordingly, at the golden hour of sunset, the procession left the Basilica of St. Mark, passed beneath the galleries of the Doges' Palace, halted at the landing stage of the Piazzetta, and then, in a moment of intense stillness, all the bells being silenced and every voice hushed, Cardinal Svampa, standing over above the lagoon, opposite San Giorgio Maggiore, raised the Sacred Host to bless the sea and the islands, and the people who make their living from the sea ; then continuing their way and making the round of the

Piazza, the procession returned to San Marco, and a second time, at the door of the Basilica, the Blessed Sacrament was raised on high to bless the city.

All over Italy men spoke in the highest terms of the activity, tact and sympathy of the patriarch of Venice on this occasion. It was not the only time. From the very beginning of his rule, the Press had sung the praises of this pastor who had so eminent a gift for gaining souls ; as, for instance, in the summer of 1895, when he began the visitation of his diocese in the " parishes of the estuary," Burano, Torcello la Bysantine, Mazzorbo and other islands, where he was received magnificently, in spite of his recommendations to the contrary ; or again, when he addressed to his clergy a now famous letter on sacred music ; or when, being continually invited to take part in religious solemnities in the neighbouring dioceses of Northern Italy, he consented to bless a colossal statue of Our Lady, raised by popular subscription, on the summit of *Monte Grappa*, made the ascent mounted on a white mule and followed by a long procession of Venetians ; and after resting a few hours in the house of a forester, continued the ascent the next day, Sunday the 4th of August 1901, up a height of 5,922 feet, celebrated Mass, and spoke to over ten thousand pilgrims gathered from all parts of the green valley over which the sun was rising.

Afterwards he came down to the plain, wearing on his hat a wreath of edelweiss, the star of the Alps, that his people had gathered for him.

The same sympathy was evinced in another field when, in the winter of 1902, Cardinal Sarto strenuously combated the project of legalising divorce, which the enemies of religion were once more trying to introduce into Italy, and succeeded in averting this hateful aftermath of a revolution.

But attention, even outside Italy, became more intense when the Cardinal had to speak in circumstances where the most adroit might have failed.

It will be remembered that on the 14th of July 1902 the campanile of San Marco suddenly fell, crushing the structure at its base, and the bas-reliefs of Sansovino. Happily no one was injured, but the multitudes who had either visited Venice or seen pictures of the beautiful city were stirred to the depths at the thought that henceforth there would be one thing of beauty the less upon the earth. The Venetians decided to rebuild the campanile without delay, and as early as the 25th of April 1903, the Feast of St. Mark, the ceremony of laying the first stone took place. On the royal platform erected in the square were the Count of Turin, representing the King of Italy, the Cardinal, the Minister Nasi, the Mayor of Venice, Count Grimani, the head of a municipality very different

to that which had formerly received the Patriarch, a French Minister, M. Chaumié, and a large number of other eminent persons. The crowds around were so immense that no human voice could possibly have made itself heard by those at the back.

Count Grimani was the first to speak, and what a revelation of the happy change of politics in the municipality !

" In four years the tower, proud and majestic, prepared to resist the ravages of time, will rise, as it was before, and where it was before. It will rise under the auspices of Your Eminence, who by bringing down upon this work the blessing of Heaven proclaim the sublime harmony that exists between religious feeling and patriotism."

Other speeches followed. Then the Cardinal blessed the first stone, after which the Count of Turin, the Patriarch, the Italian Minister, the Mayor of Venice and the French Minister threw some mortar on to the foundations. When the authorities had returned to the platform to the strains of the Royal March, it was the turn of Cardinal Sarto to speak :

" Your Royal Highness," he said, " Your Excellencies, Gentlemen, there exists no spectacle more worthy of admiration than that of a people calling down the blessing of God upon some new undertaking." After developing the historical and

religious aspect of this theme for a few moments, he said :

" I return thanks to H.R.H. the Count of Turin, to his Excellency the Minister of Public Instruction, and to all the eminent persons who by their presence have honoured this patriotic and religious festival, and I pray that, by the blessing of Heaven, the campanile will again arise, in accordance with the laws of art, and in harmony with this Church and this place unique throughout the world. May it rise, the Campanile of St. Mark, blessed by Heaven, and throughout its foundation, progress and completion, may the workers be preserved from all disaster. May it rise, the Campanile of St. Mark, blessed by Heaven, and may the day soon come when its bells will tell the true glories of Venice, and ring out ' Glory to God in the highest : and on earth peace to men of good will.' "

The French Minister, M. Chaumié, who conversed with Cardinal Sarto, and saw him on the royal platform surrounded by the great ones of the earth, displaying such gracious dignity, spontaneously declared that he was delighted with the Patriarch of Venice.

Praise, indeed, but from a mere stranger. The people of Venice, who saw their Cardinal and Patriarch daily, were better judges. The charm of his countenance, his noble bearing, his genial

strength were not lost upon them and caused an old woman to exclaim, recalling another Pope of the days of her youth, " Ah ! beautiful Pius IX ! "

The expression of the *vecchierella* was repeated with slight variations later on by those who saw Pius X at Rome, and wrote descriptions of their visit. They called him in their books : " Beautiful Pius X," and they were not far wrong.

The Patriarch had conquered his diocesans, and in that large measure in which a holy priest can influence the imperfect souls around him, he had renewed, beautified and restored to the joys of heaven many who without him would have perished. He knew only a certain number, but all, as he passed by, were attracted to him. Housewives at their doors and windows, men in gondolas, all this seafaring people blessed him in words which remind one of the Gospel : " Blessed of God ! And blessed also his mother ! "

Sometimes, as the Cardinal passed down the narrow streets, a voice might be heard to say :

" When we get to the gates of heaven, he will be so glad to see us that he will have them opened for us ! "

The Catholics, united among themselves, had combined with the moderate party to drive out the old sectarian municipality. A number of pious institutions of all kinds were revived or in-

augurated. The clergy, increased in numbers, gladly followed the lead of their chief. Venice had a Doge once more—without army or court, his only vessel a gondola ; and she loved him. He was one of the most gifted men of his time. No one could say of him that he excelled in learning, without also affirming that he excelled in charity : nor in charity, without proving that he possessed an immense power of assimilation, extensive knowledge of history both religious and profane, perfect artistic taste, and an innate power, added to long exercise, of authority. The unusual development of any one of these qualities commonly goes by the name of genius. Is it not also genius when one man possesses them all in an extraordinary degree ? May we not say that such a combination of natural gifts and acquired virtues forms the genius of perfection or of government, and that this was the portion, the mark and the glory of Giuseppe Sarto ? Not, however, all his glory nor all that can be said of this great man. Above all, he was a friend of God, a soul free from pride and so, perfectly supple under the influence of grace. And ever-watchful grace, which had long been preparing him, and found him always submissive, was about to commit to his care the three hundred millions of Catholics—and how many souls besides ?—living on this earth.

It is said that when Leo XIII was growing old, he spoke of the Venetian Cardinal confidentially to some one as "*il candidato della Serenissima*." The last time they met, he said to the Patriarch :

"There are warnings by which We know that We must soon answer the call of God. . . . You might perchance be Our successor."

When the Cardinal appeared astounded and distressed at these words, Leo XIII added :

"We feel sure that you would be of the greatest possible service to the Church."

Events were soon to justify this double prevision. After a few days' illness, Leo XIII, on the 8th of July, received Extreme Unction. He joined in the prayers, and then said : "We are going into Eternity."

On the 19th, the dying Pope spoke once more. He said to Cardinals Oreglia, Camerlingo of Holy Church, and Rampolla, Secretary of State, who were by his bedside :

"We have worked together for twenty-five years for the good of the Church. If during this time I have done you any wrong, I pray you to forgive me."

By the evening of the same day he had ceased to breathe. All the cardinals throughout the world were immediately summoned to Rome. Cardinal Sarto, delayed for several days by official

duties, left the Patriarchal Palace on the 26th. At the last moment, Don Giovanni Bressan was adding a few more things to what was already in the portmanteaux.

" What is Don Giovanni doing ? Where is he ? " said the Cardinal to his niece Amalia. " Go and tell him that a journey to Rome is not a journey to America ! "

" Go and attend the conclave, and do come back at once ! " said Amalia.

The gondola carved by Besarel, and rowed by Cavaldoro, took the Cardinal from the palace to the station. As they went down the Canal, all Venice saluted its Patriarch ; part of Venice went with him as far as the station.

" Bless us again ! " cried the people of the sea.

When he had landed in front of the station, and was standing on the marble steps, the Patriarch found himself hemmed in by a crowd who were crying : " Come back to us ! Come back ! "

He stretched out his arms and cried out :

" Living or dead, I shall come back ! "

Then they let him go. He went up the steps, crossed the station, took his place in the train, and lowering the window, stood there till Venice was out of sight.

Poor as ever, he had borrowed a few hundred lire for the journey.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POPE GIUSEPPE SARTO

THE opening of the conclave was fixed for the 31st of July, at eight o'clock in the evening. The body of Pope Leo XIII, which had been exposed in St. Peter's for the veneration of the faithful for three days, was enclosed on the 25th of July in a triple coffin, and placed in a marble niche as a temporary tomb. Along the walls of the Sistine Chapel, sixty-four thrones with canopies had been erected for the electors of the future Pope. One part of the Vatican (including the famous chapel decorated by Michelangelo, the Pauline Chapel, parish church of the Palace, the *Sala Regia* which is between the two, the Cortile di San Damaso, and the apartments where the cardinals and their conclavists were to lodge) formed in the huge palace a kind of little island cut off on all sides from any communication with the outer world.

It was already known that the Sacred College had chosen as Secretary a young prelate of thirty-

eight years, who had represented Leo XIII at the Coronation of the King of England, and whose piety, loyalty and distinguished bearing had won for him the esteem of those in authority. This was Mgr. Merry del Val, titular Archbishop of Nice and President of the Pontifical Diplomatic College. It was known also that Prince Chigi would be set over the guard of the conclave, this being a privilege of his family, and that the last cardinal named by Pius IX, Cardinal Oreglia, had presided over several plenary assemblies in the Hall of Consistory. Everything was ready for the conclave. At eight o'clock in the evening, on the 31st of July, all strangers were bidden to leave the precincts. It was the common opinion that either Cardinal Rampolla or Cardinal Gotti would be elected, the former being considered favourable to France, the latter to Germany. No one imagined that Cardinal Sarto would succeed Leo XIII, not even those who out of politeness had told him he would not be allowed to return to Venice. But perhaps his sisters and his niece Amalia did not feel quite happy about it.

The papers began to prophesy. The correspondent of a great Paris journal placed Cardinal Sarto with Cardinal Ferrari, Cardinal Vivès y Tuto and others in the background, and said of the Patriarch : " Hardly ever comes to Rome . . .

never canvasses. Sarto is worshipped by the Venetians."

Out of sixty-four cardinals, sixty-two were able to attend the conclave. Seven scrutinies took place in four days. The results of the two first were as follows : 1st August—morning: Rampolla, 24 ; Gotti, 17 ; Sarto, 5 ; divers votes, 16.

1st August—evening: Rampolla, 29; Gotti, 16 ; Sarto, 10 ; divers votes, 7.

When the cardinals, on the morning of the 2nd of August, met in the Sistine Chapel for the third scrutiny, Cardinal Puzyna, Bishop of Cracow, who had been commissioned by the old Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph, to hinder the election of Cardinal Rampolla, read a formula in Latin, declaring that his sovereign was opposed to this nomination. He carried his forgetfulness of realities so far as to say that he was honoured by such a mission. We might have hoped to see this ancient abuse of the secular power confined to past history and not to find it in our own days. It caused a great stir.

Rampolla del Tindaro replied at once :

" I regret that so serious an attempt has been made by a secular power to interfere with the liberty of the Church and the dignity of the Sacred College in the matter of Pontifical Election, and I protest against it with all the energy of which

I am capable. As to my own humble person, I declare that nothing more pleasing to me could happen."

2nd August—morning scrutiny: Rampolla, 29; Sarto, 21; Gotti, 9; divers votes, 3.

2nd August—evening scrutiny: Rampolla, 30; Sarto, 24; Gotti, 3; divers votes, 5.

As soon as he saw that there was an increase in the number of votes for him, Cardinal Sarto did his utmost to avoid the threatened dignity, even going so far as to beg the Sacred College to spare him, and declaring that he would not accept the election.

"Do not think of me," he said; "I have not the qualities requisite for a Pope."

3rd August—morning scrutiny: Sarto, 27; Rampolla, 24; Gotti, 6; divers votes, 5.

3rd August—evening scrutiny: Sarto, 35; Rampolla, 16; Gotti, 7; divers votes, 4.

Thus, on the morning of the 3rd of August, the election of the child of Riese to the office of Sovereign Pontiff was already assured. Perhaps that same evening, certainly the next day, he would have the two-thirds of the votes necessary for the election of a Pope. Troubled to the depths of his soul, he declared that he would refuse, and no remonstrances could move him.

About noon that day, after the morning scrutiny,

Mgr. Merry del Val was sent by the Cardinal Dean to the Patriarch of Venice to ask if he intended to persevere in his refusal. He had no previous acquaintance with Cardinal Sarto. He went to the apartments occupied by him, but he was not there. He then thought of looking for him in the Pauline Chapel. It was dark and there was no one in the nave. Mgr. Merry del Val caught sight of the Cardinal's conclavist, Mgr. Bressan, near the door, and at the farther end of the chapel there was a Cardinal kneeling on the pavement, his head bent, his face hidden in his hands.

The Secretary of the conclave crossed the chapel, and knelt down quietly without speaking, close to Cardinal Sarto, who raised his face, wet with tears, and said :

" Do you want me ? "

Then he listened.

" Does Your Eminence persist ? . . . Is the Cardinal Dean to give the Sacred College an official intimation of your refusal ? "

" Yes, ask him to do me this charity, *mi faccia questa carità*."

And he returned to his prayer, with the hot tears pouring down his cheeks.

Nevertheless, a few hours later, before the evening scrutiny, he yielded to the entreaties of several cardinals and withdrew his refusal.

The evening scrutiny gave him 35 votes as against 16 for Cardinal Rampolla.

The next morning, the 4th August 1903, he was elected by 50 votes.

Leaving their places, the cardinals at once surrounded the newly elected Pope, " who stood there weeping and motionless."

The Cardinal Dean Oreglia went forward, and addressing him in Latin, put the prescribed questions :—

" Dost thou accept this present election of thy person as Pope ? "

After a moment's silence, the newly elect replied :

" May this chalice be removed from me. Nevertheless, God's Will be done ! "

The answer was not judged to be sufficiently definite.

Cardinal Oreglia repeated :

" Dost thou accept this present election of thy person as Pope ? "

Then Cardinal Sarto said :

" I accept it as a cross."

" What name wilt thou take ? "

" Since I must suffer, I will take the name of those who have suffered ; I will be called Pius."

The Pope was " made." The Masters of Ceremonies went into the Sistine Chapel to take down

the *baldachini* from all the thrones except Cardinal Sarto's, as a sign that authority had passed from the Sacred College into the hands of Pope Pius X, while he, in the sacristy, put on the white cassock. Then he was conducted back to the church, where he received the homage of the cardinals. The Cardinal Chamberlain put on his finger the ring of the Fisherman that Leo XIII had entrusted to the Prefect of Ceremonies for his successor. It was a quarter to twelve.

In the Piazza of St. Peter an immense crowd was waiting in silence, all eyes fixed on the loggia of the Basilica, whence is announced to the city and the world the election of a new Pope. Suddenly a murmur ran through the crowd. Four servants of the Vatican had opened the windows of the balcony, over which they spread a white carpet with a purple border which hung down over the parapet. Cardinal Macchi came forward on to the balcony and five hundred soldiers sent by the Italian Government presented arms.

The Cardinal in a clear voice cried out :

" I bring you news of great joy : we have a Pope, the most eminent and venerable Lord Joseph Sarto, who has taken the name of Pius X."

Loud cheers arose, the great bells of the Basilica began to ring, and all the bells of Rome followed suit, to greet the newly elected Pope.

Where would he lodge in the Vatican? The upholsterers hastened to ask his orders. He replied, after consulting one or two prelates, that he would take up his abode for the present in the apartments formerly occupied by Cardinal Rampolla, on the third floor.

"Above all," he said, as he dismissed them, "do not make it too grand. And no mirrors!"

At the end of this exhausting day, the Pope retired to his private apartments; seated at a table, he was finishing his office when some one announced the Secretary of the Conclave. "Most Holy Father," said Mgr. Merry del Val," in spite of your great fatigue, I think Your Holiness ought to sign to-day the letters to the heads of states notifying your nomination."

"And are you not tired, too? . . . How shall I sign?"

The Pope took up a pen and experimented on a piece of paper, then with his usual simplicity asked:

"Is that right?"

When all was finished, the Secretary of the Conclave took his leave, saying that his duties were now at an end.

"What! are you going to leave me? Am I to be all alone? . . . No, stay on for the present."

The Coronation of the Pope took place at St.

Peter's on the morning of the 9th of August. Pius X was borne into the Basilica on the *sedia gestatoria*, the Noble Guard in the loggia playing the Triumphal March on their silver trumpets. More than fifty thousand persons were present, packed in the church. The Pope blessed the crowd, and as cheers arose on all sides, he placed his finger on his lips, compelling silence. Pius X stopped in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and, surrounded by the cardinals, prayed for a long time, kneeling. He was then carried to the white throne placed in the Chapel of St. Gregory, where he received the homage of the cardinals, patriarchs, bishops and prelates ; then, still the centre of the solemn procession, he advanced towards the Altar of the Confession, where Mass was to be celebrated. As he reached it, one of the prelates, as directed by the ceremonial, set fire to a little flax, which was soon consumed, and sang three times in Latin : " Holy Father, thus passes the glory of the world ! "

Pius X, before reaching the altar of the Confession, stopped once more and bowed before the statue of St. Peter, the Pope of twenty centuries back. After Mass, the procession went up to the Confession of St. Peter; there Cardinal Macchi placed the tiara on the head of the Pope, saying :

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" Receive the tiara with three crowns, and know that thou art the Father of princes and kings, Ruler of the world, Vicar on earth of Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom be honour and glory for ever and ever ! "

Then Pius X for the first time chanted the formula of Absolution and Apostolic Benediction.

At this moment, cries of " Long live Pius X ! " and from the Venetians even " Long live our Patriarch ! " rang out beneath the vaults of St. Peter. Neither his finger placed on his lips nor imploring gestures were able to impose silence. Pius X, pale and deeply moved, smiled at the joy of his people.

Notwithstanding the heat, numerous audiences took place at the end of the summer and beginning of the autumn of 1903. One of these, about the middle of August, was for the ambassadors and ministers accredited to the Holy See.

What kind of man was the new Pope ? They were curious to see and know him. On the appointed day the representatives of the different legations, which by force of circumstances had postponed their vacation, assembled in the Throne Room.

Some assuredly said to themselves :

" This Pope is no diplomat, what attitude will he adopt towards us, members of the Service, and

on what subjects will he converse?" Futile questions. He was just himself. And in truth, he had met too many different varieties of men to be astonished at another. Even should it chance to be super-refined, that would not displease a Venetian. Besides, had he not most exalted connections, such as not many diplomatists have? Sixty years of prayer; habitual converse with Christ, His angels and His saints; these things do not in any way impair good breeding, but they do prevent any shyness in the presence of the great ones of this world. Pius X showed himself full of interest, dignity, and a tactful consideration which was not manifested merely by words, and the diplomats, taken by surprise, wondered at the perfection given by holiness to good breeding.

Immediately after this they presented themselves to the pro-Secretary of State, Mgr. Merry del Val, to pay him their visit of ceremony. He was in the Borgia apartments which had been assigned to him. He had had chairs brought into the beautiful *Sala dei Pontifici*, decorated by Pinturicchio for Alexander VI. After the preliminary introductions and exchange of courtesies were over, naturally the first question that arose was what impression they had retained of the audience with His Holiness. Having asked this once or twice, Mgr. Merry del Val was surprised

at the answers. They undoubtedly indicated their satisfaction, but with it was mingled a certain difficulty in formulating their thoughts.

Their impressions were too fresh to be put into the words which would later on be introduced into everyday conversation, and they hesitated. When all had taken their seats round the Prelate, he began adroitly by alluding to the remembrance each one would carry away from their first visit to Pius X. Then one of the German diplomats, the Prussian Minister, rose and said :

" What is there in that man which so attracts one to him ? Can you tell us, Monsignore ? "

What was it ? The Church's history can give us other examples of that fascination, mingled with surprise and shyness, that men experience in the presence of certain souls.

Pius X wished also to receive the people of Rome and to be known by them. During these first months of his Pontificate, when few pilgrims visited Rome on account of the intense heat, the different parishes were invited on successive Sundays. The audience took place in the ample Cortile di San Damaso. The trumpets of the Pontifical Guard sounding at the right-hand corner of the Court, announced the coming of the Sovereign Pontiff, who, wearing the scarlet mantle over his white cassock, appeared on the balcony of the first

storey, that of the *Loggie di Raffaello*. He was welcomed with prolonged cheers. When he raised his beautiful hand in blessing, there was silence, and the people listened while the Pope explained to them the Gospel of the day. This great parish priest of Rome and of the whole world spoke as did St. Peter, with love and assurance, of the same Lord Jesus Christ. And those who listened, the poor and the less poor, were touched, for they knew that he loved them truly for our Lord's sake. When he had finished speaking, and had given them his blessing, they sang the French hymn which has been translated into every language: "*Nous voulons Dieu!*"

The Pope, for a moment longer, looked at them with his grave smile. Then he raised his eyes a little. Above the gate of the cortile opposite, he could see the Alban hills, a few villas in the Campagna, lines of lordly pines standing motionless. It was the "far away," where he would never go again.

CHAPTER IX

PONTIFICAL ACTS

Pius X soon learnt to know the palace, court etiquette, offices, rules, dignitaries, even the humblest servants of the vast organisation by which the Church is governed. As he had taken up his former burdens, so did he accept what he had least of all desired, the supreme charge, and he showed himself in no way unequal to coping with it. It was the Will of God, not his own, that had placed him where he now was.

Though his life was still remarkable for its simplicity, no one could approach him without being impressed by his innate greatness. This he had always possessed; new duties and public receptions only made it more apparent. Pilgrims from all over the world were struck by it. In public functions Pius X was the personification of majestic dignity. Even in his familiar conversations with old friends, or pilgrims whom he had long known, if he began to speak of the unjust and continual assaults of the world against the Church

or if he had in any way to defend the cause of the Church, his voice would assume a tone of authority, and his countenance an expression of noble dignity. As Cardinal Merry del Val has said :

" For Pius X, this exalted dignity was like the tiara and the other sacred ornaments which he only wore when obliged and to which he gave no further thought once he had removed them. I remember bringing him a telegram from some bishop, asking for a dispensation for a marriage. It was a difficult and serious matter. The Pope read the telegram and said in an undertone : ' Yes, that concerns the Pope,' as if he were speaking of some one else. Then he said aloud :

" ' Let Us act as Pope,' and dictated the answer to me.

" When he had to settle some question for which he was not prepared, he would say :

" ' I will think about it ; ' then looking at the crucifix, he would add : ' *He* will decide.' "

The same witness of his everyday life said also :

" He always wanted to act for the best. If he was obliged to take some step which would cause pain to any one, it was he who suffered first, and often it prevented his sleeping. But when the day arrived on which he had to speak or sign his name, he would evince the utmost firmness."

Few men, indeed, have manifested so much

courage. He was strong from a sense of duty, from his clear vision of things and his earnest prayer for strength. Souls of this stamp are strong almost in spite of themselves, their strength is a supernatural virtue. It can be said of Pius X with truth that he was " gentle and severe," so long as we remember that gentleness was natural to him, whereas severity was often necessitated by his office.

At Rome, as at Venice, Mantua and Salzano, he was a great worker, overwhelmed with business and neglecting nothing. We only have to question any of the prelates who knew him at the Vatican, and we shall be told :

" The personal part he took in the various Acts signed by him was very great."

There were a great number of these Acts during a Pontificate of eleven years. The Letters, Encyclicals, *Motu proprio*, Addresses, which have been published, amount to over 350. If the sum total of all the Acts is taken, including, besides those we have mentioned, the Decrees of Roman Congregations and the various documents issuing from the Secretariate of State, to which the Pope can have been no stranger, the number reaches 3,322. This is the computation of the Italian Benedictine, Dom Benedetto Pierami, already quoted, who adds this reflection :

" It was one of the most fruitful Pontificates in the history of the Church."

For more reasons than one, we cannot here analyse so great a work. It would demand space, time and means beyond our disposal. We will therefore select a few of these Acts, which Pius X was chosen by Heaven to accomplish, and which will bring down blessings on his name, far beyond the century which first knew them.

1. *The First Encyclical* (4th October 1903).—Pius X recalls and magnificently develops the motto which he had tried to put into action ever since he first became a priest : " *Instaurare omnia in Christo* "—to restore all things in Christ. He refers to the vehement desire he experienced to refuse the office of Sovereign Pontiff :

" For, besides the fact that we deemed Ourselves altogether unworthy, through Our insignificance, of the honour of the Pontificate, who would not have been disturbed at seeing himself designated to succeed him who, ruling the Church with supreme wisdom for nearly twenty-six years, showed himself adorned with such sublimity of mind, such lustre of every virtue, as to attract to himself the admiration even of adversaries, and to leave his memory consecrated by glorious achievements ?

" Then, again, to omit other motives, We were terrified beyond all else by the disastrous state of human society to-day. For who can fail to see that society is at the present time, more than in any past age, suffering from a terrible and deep-rooted malady, which, developing every day and eating into its inmost being, is dragging it to destruction? You understand, Venerable Brethren, what this disease is—apostacy from God. Since, however, it has pleased the Divine Will to raise Our lowliness to such sublimity of power, We take courage *in Him Who strengthens Us*; and setting Ourselves to work, relying on the power of God, We proclaim that We have no other aim in the supreme Pontificate but that of 'restoring all things in Christ, so that Christ may be all and in all.' "

The Pope is well aware, and he mentions it here, that in the great battle he is waging for the glory of our Divine Lord, many will endeavour to discredit the motives of the Head of the Church, and to twist them to their own party interests.

" To eliminate all such vain delusions, We say to them with emphasis that We do not wish to be, and with the Divine assistance never shall be, aught before human society but the minister of God, of Whose authority We are the depositary. The interests of God shall be Our interests, and

for these We are resolved to expend all Our strength and Our life itself. . . ."

The bishops will help the Pope in this great undertaking. They know the raging of the nations, the iniquitous war waged against God, and " those habits of life, both secret and open, which ignore His sovereignty."

Pius X, familiar with the Scriptures from his childhood and knowing well the folly and misery of the world, questions whether we may not have already entered on the final period foretold by Our Lord. He replies :

" All who consider these matters have a right to fear that such perversion of mind may be the beginning of the evils predicted for the end of Time—their first contact, as it were, with the world—and that in very truth the *son of perdition*, of whom the Apostle speaks, may have already appeared in our midst."

What will be the end of the warfare ?

" The victory always remains with the Creator. And it is not enough to say that ; destruction dogs the heels of man most closely at the very moment that he is most presumptuous in his hope of triumph."

It behoves us therefore by word and by works to claim for God " the fulness of His authority over men and over all creatures, so that His

rights and His authority may be recognised by all with veneration and respected in practice. By accomplishing these duties, men are not merely obeying the laws of nature, they are also labouring for the advantage of the human race.

" Though on the one hand the progress of civilisation is with justice vaunted, yet who does not feel his soul, Venerable Brethren, plunged into fear and sadness when he sees the majority of men struggling one against another with such bitterness that we might call it a war of all against all.

" Without any doubt, there is a desire in all hearts for peace, and there is no one who does not long for it most earnestly. But how foolish is he who seeks this peace apart from God ; for if God be driven out, justice is banished, and once justice fails, all hope of peace is lost. . . .

" We know well that there are many who, prompted by love of peace—that is to say quiet and order—unite together, *on the side of order*, as they call it. Alas ! their hopes are vain, their labours wasted ! Only those can be *on the side of order* and have the power to restore calm in the midst of this upheaval, who are *on the side of God*. . . .

" This return of the nations to reverence for the Divine Majesty and Sovereignty, whatever

other efforts may be made to bring it about, can only come through Jesus Christ. . . .

" Whence it follows that *to restore all things in Christ* and to lead men back to the Divine Obedience are one and the same thing. . . .

" Now what is the way that will lead us to Jesus Christ ? We have it before us—the Church. Behold, therefore, Venerable Brethren, the great work that is entrusted to Us, to Us and to you also —We have to bring back mankind, now straying far from the wisdom of Christ, to obedience to the Church. The Church in her turn will deliver them to Christ, and Christ to God."

In order thus to bring back the world to Christ, what means does the Pope recommend to the pastors of mankind ?

First, the bishops must form holy priests. Their principal care must be to ensure and obtain integrity of doctrine and holiness of life in the diocesan seminaries. It is undoubtedly right that young priests should give themselves to the study of every branch of learning which will enable them " the more successfully to refute the calumnies of the enemies of the Faith."

But the Pope declares openly that his preference " is and always will be for those who, without neglecting study, either ecclesiastical or profane, devote themselves more especially to the good of

souls by exercising the various ministries which fall to the lot of the priest."

For he has compassion on the misery of the multitude, and he quotes the lament of Jeremias : " The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them."

Religious instruction will bring men back to God.

" How many there are who hate Christ and abhor the Church and the Gospel more through ignorance than wickedness, of whom it may well be said : ' They blaspheme whatever things they know not ? ' This is found to be the case not only among the people at large . . . but even among the more cultivated and those enriched in other respects with great erudition."

Souls who have gone astray must also be won by charity.

" This charity which is *patient and kind* must be held out even to our enemies and persecutors . . . after all, they may seem worse than they really are. . . . May we not hope that the fire of charity may drive out the darkness from their souls and enthrone there the light and peace of God ? "

Lastly, it is not only bishops and priests who are to bring back the world to Jesus Christ. They are to be aided by the whole body of the faithful, who will act, not, of course, according to their own

views and inclinations, "But always under the direction and orders of the bishops; for to no one in the Church save to you is it given to preside over, to teach, *to govern* the Church of God, over which the Holy Ghost has placed you to rule. May God Who is plentiful in mercy, of His goodness hasten this restoration of the human race in Christ Jesus."

* * * *

When this first Encyclical made its appearance, the Pope had not yet definitely nominated his Secretary of State.

Mgr. Merry del Val was only pro-Secretary, and this arrangement lasted till the 17th of October. On that day, after the morning audience in which the Pope attends to the business of the Holy See, Pius X handed a paper to Mgr. Merry del Val, who had no suspicion of its import. It was a letter full of affectionate praise, conferring the office of Secretary of State on the prelate who had been performing its functions for about three months. Six days later, in a consistory, the Pope closed the allocution addressed to the Sacred College with these words:

"And now, Venerable Brethren, it is a joy to Us to take thought for the completion of your illustrious college; consequently We have decided to bestow the purple to-day upon two men of

choice. One of these who in the interregnum was honoured by your votes, has during the past months given Us proof of his noble character, superior intelligence, and a prudence equal to the important business with which he has to deal."

Thus Mgr. Merry del Val was created Cardinal, and Pius X showed once more that the new Pope possessed one of the most essential qualities of a sovereign—knowledge of men and the right choice of ministers for the welfare of the kingdom.

2. *Sacred Music.*—Pius X has not, as is sometimes said, reformed sacred music, but the music used in Church; or, to put it more exactly, he has restored it to its rightful place, which had been usurped by profane music. What he had done in Venetia, he wished now to do for the whole world. Many people were anxious for this reform. One of these, a musical critic, thoroughly knowledgeable as well as a true artist, came to Rome as early as the autumn of 1903 to bring forward the desire of many musical persons for the restoration of sacred music in the churches. The Pope, more than ready to accede to this request, at once made known his own intentions in the matter. He was, moreover, delighted with the simplicity, understanding, and the good Italian of the French author. The conversation was renewed.

Created Chamberlain of the Cape and Sword, Bellaigue, from this time to the death of the Sovereign Pontiff, used to go once or twice every year to Rome, and he may be considered as one of those who knew Pius X intimately. In a book—*Pius X and Rome*—he gives an account of his first audience, part of which we quote. He has also allowed us to quote some of his private notes, iotted down as he left the audiences, concerning certain facts which are now a matter of history.

" 13th October 1903.—The Pope in the galleries above the Loggie of Raphael. He passes by each one, giving his ring to kiss. He looks gentle, kind and sorrowful. Beautiful deep greyish-brown eyes, a strongly formed nose, hands very white, beautifully shaped and strong ; his hair short and brushed back. No photograph gives any idea of him. Mgr. Bisleti gave our names to the Pope, who said he would expect us to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock. . . . He passed by, blessing and giving his hand not only to be kissed but pressed ; his expression was serene, rather sorrowful, his movements dignified, quiet and slow. He went all down the gallery, while the setting sun bathed in crimson the city and Alban Hills."

" 14th October.—We arrived for the audience at eleven o'clock. Dark rooms hung with green silk and red ; shutters half closed ; all in shadow ;

whisperings; officers of the household, monsignori and chamberlains. We waited three-quarters of an hour, the Pope was speaking with the Nuncio of Paris. . . . We were shown into the room adjoining that of the Pope. Silence; heat outside. One felt Rome at midday burning and luminous. . . . Then the door opened, we were announced and went in.

"A very small room, green hangings with a gold design, a closed window. To the left, under a little canopy, the Pope was standing in front of a mahogany writing-table without any papers on it. . . . Between the door and the table barely room for the three genuflections. Whilst we were making them, the Pope watched us, as though he would hasten the accomplishment of the ceremonial rite. We kissed his hand, he pressed ours, and made us sit down quite close to him. The conversation began between him and me in Italian. He has a Venetian accent. I expressed our joy, as artists and Christians, the hopes we place in him and our confidence in his promises. I reminded him of his words at Venice, and he was surprised to find that I knew them. He said to me:

"'What would you like? An Encyclical? *Motu proprio?*'

"'Holy Father, I have not come to give advice, but to make a request.'

" ' Yes, yes, I understand ; in six weeks it will be ready.'

" We spoke of Mgr. Perosi, whom he loves as a son. He told me what the music at Venice was like before he went there. . . . But he has changed everything. Two renderings of a Mass of Palestrina's, under the direction of Perosi. Triumph, feelings of the faithful. The first time, they were enchanted, the second ' *innamorati* ' . . .

" ' We shall have some fights, as we have had at Rome, bad ones.'

" He spoke of his beloved Benedictines at Solesmes . . .

" ' Holy Father, you ought to have taken the name of Gregory.'

"Then with an embarrassed smile, and a modest, retiring gesture, he said :

" ' I to sign myself Gregory XVII ! It would be appalling ! ' "

On another occasion, the Pope, in the presence of the same witness, spoke those sublime words, now become famous :

" I wish the prayer of my people to rest on the beautiful."

Later on, Camille Bellaigue, who was in a position to judge accurately of the character of Pius X, wrote in his notes :

" Sad, do they say ? Never in private. In

public, yes. Official ceremonies are a burden to him, the tiara weighs heavy on his brow, and the gold cope on his shoulders. He has forbidden cheering. One day, as he was carried into St. Peter's on the *sedia* and the people began to cry out, he was heard to murmur: 'The servant should not be praised in the House of the Master.'

"It seems that when by himself he has his hours of depression. One of his intimates told me that he found him one day looking at a photograph, his eyes full of tears—the photograph of the station at Rome!

"'To go outside! To go outside,' he said to us, as if he were in a dream.

"'But I pray every day that the Pope may have no more wishes.'"

Even before six weeks had passed, the promise was fulfilled. On the 22nd of November 1903, the Feast of St. Cecilia, the Pope put his signature to the "*Motu proprio on Sacred Music*" which he himself called "the Juridical Code of Sacred Music." It is a composition in which is manifested not only a jealous pride for the House of God, but the practical good sense of a man of artistic feeling, who has been a parish priest and knows choirmasters, singers and the usual programme of feast days.

"Among the cares of the pastoral office," says

Pius X in this *Motu proprio*, " a leading one is without question that of maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God in which the august mysteries of religion are celebrated. . . . Nothing should have place, therefore, in the temple calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful, nothing that may give reasonable cause for disgust or scandal, nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and the sanctity of the sacred functions. . . . We do not touch separately on the abuses in this matter which may arise. To-day Our attention is directed to one of the most common of them, one of the most difficult to eradicate, the existence of which is sometimes to be deplored in places where everything else is deserving of the highest praise. . . . Such is the abuse affecting sacred chant and music. And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself ; or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time ; or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art ; or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits ; or, finally, to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact re-

mains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship. . . . We consider it Our first duty, without further delay, to raise Our voice at once in reproof and condemnation of all that is seen to be out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of public worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices. . . . Hence, in order that no one for the future may be able to plead in excuse that he did not clearly understand his duty, and that all vagueness may be eliminated from the interpretation of matters which have already been commanded, We have deemed it expedient to point out briefly the principles regulating sacred music in the functions of public worship, and to gather together in a general survey the principal prescriptions of the Church against the more common abuses in this subject."

Having thus exposed the lofty motives by which he is prompted, the Pope develops a detailed *Instruction on Sacred Music*. Forming an integral part of the solemn Liturgy, sacred music actually participates in the same end.

" It must be *holy*, and must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it.

" It must be true art . . . but it must at the same time be universal in the sense that while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them."

The second chapter of the " *Instruction* " treats of different *kinds of sacred music* ; the third, of the *liturgical text*. The dignity of these pages and the evident fitness of the rules laid down recommend them to every thoughtful mind.

" These qualities," says the Pope—" holiness, true art, and universality—are to be found, in the highest degree, in the Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices. . . .

" *The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration, and savour the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes ; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy is it of the temple.* The ancient traditional Gregorian Chant must, therefore, be largely restored to the function

of public worship, and everybody must take for certain that an ecclesiastical function loses nothing of its solemnity when it is accompanied by no other music but this.

" Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times.

" The above-mentioned qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by the classic polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the fifteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina . . .

" This, too, must therefore be restored largely in ecclesiastical functions . . .

" The Church has always recognised and favoured the progress of the arts, admitting to the service of the cult everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages—always, however, with due regard to the liturgical laws. Consequently, modern music is also admitted in the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.

" Still, since modern music has risen mainly to

serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces."

The Popes, protectors of sacred music, are also the protectors of the liturgical language. All the Roman Pontiffs have upheld, safe-guarded, and diffused throughout the world the Latin tongue as the glorious coadjutor of Holy Church. Pius X in his turn, laying down instructions for censors, forbids the singing of anything whatever " in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions—much more to sing in the vernacular the variable or common parts of the Mass and Office. . . .

" In the hymns of the Church the traditional form of the hymn is preserved. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose, for instance, a *Tantum ergo* in such wise that the first strophe presents a romanza, a cavatina, an adagio, and the *Genitori* an allegro."

(That last sentence was certainly written by Pius X.) He reminds us that women may not be admitted to form part of the choir or choir school. The chant must always hold the principal place ; instruments are only subordinate and must never

predominate. There must be no flourish of trumpets, no drums, cymbals, or pianos in the church.

These very full instructions of the Pope end with three desires or recommendations : that bishops should institute in their dioceses a special commission for the proper rendering of sacred music ; that it should be taught in the seminaries ; and that the *Scholæ cantorum* should be established, if possible, even in country places.

The Pope knew well, when he extended to the whole world the reform already established by him in Venice, that it would meet with plenty of opposition from prejudice, sloth, and conflicting interests. The Church understands her poor children. She repeats her injunctions ; she refutes the worst objections that are brought forward ; she encourages those whom she has ever ready to fight for her cause all over the world.

In the *Acta apostolicæ sedis* of the first year of Pius X's Pontificate, there are no less than five other public treatises, either commentaries on the *Motu proprio* of the 22nd of November 1903 or prescribing various means of carrying out the reform. The first of these is a Letter—a masterpiece—addressed to Cardinal Respighi, Vicar-General of Rome, and dated " On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, in the year 1903." The

Pope expresses his hope that the work of restoring sacred music will be seconded by all, " Not merely with that blind submission, always laudable though it be, which is accorded out of a pure spirit of obedience to commands that are onerous and contrary to one's own manner of thinking and feeling, but with that alacrity of will which springs from the intimate persuasion of having to do so on grounds duly weighed, clear, evident, and beyond question. . . . This alacrity of will We look for in a very special way among the clergy and faithful of this Our beloved city of Rome, the centre of Christendom and the seat of the supreme authority of the Church."

For there were musical customs to be changed, even in Rome. Had not Benedict XIV already said, alluding to the pilgrims who visited the city : " We desire that they may not return to their own countries scandalised by our customs." Too much instrumental music ! And Benedict XIV continued ingenuously : " What opinion will be formed of us by those who, coming from countries in which instruments are not used in church, hear them in our churches, just as they might in theatres and other profane places ? They will come, too, from places and countries where there is singing and music in the churches of the same kind as in ours. But if they are persons of sound

judgment, they must be grieved not to find in our music that remedy for the evil in their own churches which they came hither to seek. . . . You, therefore, Lord Cardinal, in your high office as Our Vicar in Rome for spiritual matters, will, We are sure, exert yourself with the gentleness that is characteristic of you, but with equal firmness, to the end that the music executed in the churches and chapels of the secular and regular clergy of this city may be in entire harmony with Our instructions. There is much to be corrected or removed in the chants of the Mass, of the Litany of Loreto, of the Eucharistic hymns; but that which needs a thorough renewal is the singing of the Vespers of the feasts celebrated in the different churches and basilicas. The liturgical prescriptions of the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* and the beautiful musical traditions of the classical Roman schools are no longer to be found. For the devout psalmody of the clergy, in which the people also used to join, there have been substituted interminable musical compositions on the words of the psalms, all of them modelled on old theatrical works, and most of them of such meagre artistic value that they would not be tolerated for a moment even in second-rate concerts.

" Certain it is that Christian piety and devotion are not promoted by them; the curiosity of some

of the less intelligent is fed, but the majority, disgusted and scandalised, wonder how it is that such an abuse can still survive."

The Pope now issues his orders! How thoroughly he does it! with what certainty and zeal! Having pointed out the abuse, he commands:

"We therefore wish the cause to be completely extirpated . . . And do you, Lord Cardinal, neither grant indulgence nor concede delays. The difficulty is not diminished but rather augmented by postponement, and since the thing is to be done let it be done immediately and resolutely. Let all have confidence in Us and in Our Word, with which heavenly grace and blessing are united."

At the end of this splendid letter, he recommends the Cardinal to see that in all colleges and ecclesiastical seminaries of Rome, "in which such a large and choice body of young clerics from all parts of the world are being educated," the Gregorian Chant is cultivated with special care—restored as it now is and published in a complete edition, in conformity with the ancient manuscripts, in which it will be found "sweet, soft, easy to learn, and of a beauty so fresh and full of surprises that wherever it has been introduced it has never failed to excite real enthusiasm in the

youthful singers. Now, when delight enters into the fulfilment of duty, everything is done with greater alacrity and with more lasting fruit."

On the 25th of April 1904, in a second *Motu proprio*, Pius X announced that, in order to provide the Roman Church and those in communion with her with a general edition of the Liturgical Gregorian melodies, he had decided to have published by the Vatican Press " Liturgical books containing the chant of the Holy Roman Church," as restored by him. He specially charged the Benedictine monks of the French congregation, in the Monastery of Solesmes, " with the drawing up of those parts which contained the chant."

3. *Catholic Popular Action.*—A child of the people by birth, the sympathies of Pius X, as curate, parish priest, vicar-capitular, bishop, and patriarch, both by conviction and natural inclination, had always been on the side of the people.

From his youth, the voice of their grievances on the one hand, and on the other the sophisms of ambitious politicians in search of votes and popularity had rung in his ears. He had therefore studied the social question more closely than others, and knew that while working-men have other grievances, none is more crying than their defenceless attitude in face of the deadly errors

held out to them as remedies by the revolutionists lying in wait to ensnare them. Twenty discourses, given before his elevation to the Papacy, show the experience he already possessed in this difficult and far-reaching problem, and his entire conformity with the Acts of Leo XIII. We have already alluded to the address given by the Patriarch of Venice in August 1896 to the " socialist Catholics " of Italy, assembled at Padua under his presidency. We open the pamphlet, yellow with age, distributed at that time to the members of the Congress.

" Whence," says Cardinal Sarto, " come all these errors ; socialism, communism, these utopias of the emancipation of the flesh, the setting up of nature, equality of rank, the distribution of goods, the sovereignty of Reason ? All these monstrosities fail to recognise the Fall of man and his consequent degradation . . . the existence of evil and the need of a remedy ; all these articles of our faith are rejected by modern systems of education, and from this negation proceed all the anti-social maxims that are spread before our eyes. To believe in Jesus Christ is to admit the reality of the Fall, and with it the supernatural intervention of God, the Redemption, the teaching of the Gospel, the necessity of suffering and resignation.

" To admit these truths is to be in direct opposition to rationalism, naturalism, socialism

and communism. It is openly to confess Christianity, which will be ever the most insurmountable obstacle to disorder, the implacable enemy of all excess and error, the incorruptible guardian of all truths, Divine and human. If Jesus Christ be made the basis of all these questions it will explain the strange mystery of the inequality of men on this earth, an inequality which is necessary and inevitable, for if it were banished one day by the generous action of some visionary it would reappear the next, since it is a law of this perishable world. Whatever we may do, it will always be an impossibility to unite these two extremes, first and last, rich and poor, great and lowly, unless we place between them the Gospel and the Cross—the Cross the one Ark of the Covenant, the Gospel the only Treaty of Peace.

" To make Jesus Christ the basis of these questions is to place on a secure foundation the most delicate problem of the present day, the rights of property ; it puts the disinherited classes, owners and capitalists in their proper places.

" Jesus Christ and the Church must not be confounded with those earthly powers who, finding themselves placed between opposing parties, either adopt the convenient principle of neutrality, according to the inclination of their own attractions and repugnances, with no other rule than

that of an execrable prudence, or else give and withhold their support capriciously, according to what they deem the future will bring forth. . . ."

At the end of this discourse Mgr. Sarto said again :

" Accept my congratulations and my thanks for the great good that you have already done and that you will continue to do in the Catholic social cause by opposing the hateful and pernicious doctrines and subversive principles of liberalism and its worthy offspring, socialism and anarchy. I pray that this magnificent Congress, inaugurated by prayer to our Divine Lord and held under the auspices of His august Vicar, may produce much fruit.

" Praised be Jesus Christ ! "

This is the doctrine of centuries, in accordance with the demands of reason, taught in the Scriptures, but attacked, nevertheless, throughout the world, openly or insidiously, by ignorant, deluded or wicked men. In every age there have been Catholics and even priests who have come under one of these categories. Pius X, who had formerly taken part in or presided over these Congresses of Christian Popular Action, was well aware of this danger : like Leo XIII before him, he had seen gifted natures deluded and led astray by the glamour of words and notably by the word " democracy," which can be understood in so

many different senses. He felt these matters deeply. Five months had not elapsed since his elevation to the Chair of Peter, before he published, on the 18th of December 1903, a *Motu proprio* on Christian Popular Action, an Act original in form, in which the Pope stands out as the Teacher of Social Science.

He recalls and sums up the celebrated Encyclicals of Leo XIII, *Quod apostolici muneris* of the 28th of December 1878 ; *Rerum novarum* of the 15th of May 1891 ; *Graves de communi* of the 18th of January 1901, and lays down in nineteen articles the rules for Christian Popular Action, " which," he says, " ought to be faithfully followed by all Catholics and which it would be rash to disregard, even in the smallest detail."

We give a notable part of these fundamental principles :

I.—" Human society, as God has founded it, is composed of unequal elements ; . . . to equalise these is impossible and would result in the destruction of society itself." (*Quod apostolici.*)

II.—" The equality of the different members of society rests wholly on the fact that all have been equally created by God and bought by the Blood of Jesus Christ, and that all, according to the exact measure of their deserts, will be judged, rewarded or punished by God." (*Quod apostolici.*)

III.—" Hence it is conformable to the order established by God that there should be in human society princes and subjects, employers and employed, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, noble and plebeian who, united among themselves by a bond of love, are bound mutually to help one another to attain to their last end in heaven, and on earth to their material and moral welfare." (*Quod apostolici.*)

IV.—" With regard to earthly goods, man has not only the general faculty of using them, as do animals, but also the right of having them in stable permanent possession. He must have not only things that are consumed by use, but those also which, though they have been reduced into use, continue for further use in after time." (*Rerum novarum.*)

V.—" The natural right of private property is indisputable, whether it be the fruit of labour and industry, of cession or donation, and each one may reasonably dispose of it as he pleases." (*Rerum novarum.*)

VI.—" To allay the conflict between the wealthy and the wage-earners, it is needful to distinguish between justice and charity. There is no right of revindication except when justice has been infringed." (*Rerum novarum.*)

VII.—" The obligations of justice for the

artisan and the working-man are these : honestly and fairly to carry out the work that has been freely and equitably agreed upon ; never to injure the property nor to outrage the person of an employer ; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause, nor to engage in riot or disorder." (*Rerum novarum.*)

VIII.—" The obligations of justice for capitalists and employers are as follows :—To pay their workmen just wages ; to refrain from cutting down their lawful earnings whether by force, fraud, or by open or secret usury ; to give them liberty to fulfil their religious duties ; not to expose them to corrupting influences and dangerous occasions ; not to lead them to neglect their home and family or to squander their earnings ; never to tax them beyond their strength or employ them in work unsuited to their age or sex." (*Rerum novarum.*)

IX.—" It is an obligation of charity for the rich and the well-to-do to succour the poor and needy, according to the precept of the Gospel. This precept is of such serious obligation that, at the Day of Judgment, special account will be taken of its accomplishment, as Christ Himself has told us." (*Rerum novarum.*)

XI.—" Capitalists and labourers can powerfully contribute to the solution of the labour question

by founding such institutions as will afford opportune aid to those who are in distress, and draw the two classes more closely together ; among these may be enumerated, societies for mutual help ; various assurance societies established by private persons, ' patronages ' or institutions for the care of children and, above all, corporations of arts and crafts." (*Rerum novarum.*)

XII.—" This is the special object of Christian Popular Action or Christian Democracy, with its numerous and varied works. But this Christian Democracy must be taken in the sense understood by authority, far removed from that of ' social democracy,' since it has for its basis the principles of Faith and Catholic Morality, above all that of not infringing in any way the inviolable right of private property." (*Graves de communi.*)

XIII.—" Moreover, Christian Democracy must never mix itself up in politics, it must never lend itself to further the interests of any party nor any political undertaking ; that is outside its domain ; it is meant to be a beneficent movement for the welfare of the people, resting on natural right and the precepts of the Gospel." (*Graves de communi.*)

XIX.—" . . . Let Catholic writers, while upholding the cause of the working-man and the poor, be careful not to employ any terms which

might inspire the people with aversion for the upper classes of society. They must never speak of 'rights' and 'justice' when it is purely a question of charity, as has been explained above. They must remember Christ, Who wills all men to be united in the mutual bonds of a love which is the perfection of justice, and implies the obligation of working for the good of our neighbour."

How great are the wisdom and experience manifested in these instructions, and how touching is the co-operation of two great Popes for the welfare of the working world!

The rules laid down are liberating, freeing us from error and from the love of ourselves, but this does not make them acceptable to all. There have always been in Italy, for which the *Motu proprio* was specially written—as indeed everywhere—foolhardy apostles, the heedless, often indeed unconscious, tools of the most erroneous doctrines. They are incapable of accepting the advice they need so badly, they are too credulous, ready to listen to every novelty, and unable to value the limitations imposed on us by God. The thought of the inequality in human society angers them; the recommendation of the Popes to respect private property, the duty of thrift, perhaps even the prohibition against violence in upholding the rights of labour, run contrary to their dreams of a

world-transformation which they have the simplicity to call happiness. Besides, the democrats of Catholic Popular Action are often the partisans of a politico-social democracy, against which the Popes, and particularly Leo XIII, have put men on their guard. They know the teaching of the Gospel, which is that of the Church, as to the source of authority : *omnis potestas a Deo :* all authority is from God. It is not made by a majority. Those nominated by the majority are merely designated, not invested with authority, by popular suffrage. The power held by those who are chosen by the people emanates from God and cannot act in opposition to His Will. It has, therefore, its limitations, to which it is subject ; it is bound to respect the law of God, all order established by Him and the Church He has founded.

There is another barrier—in reality a protection —that many of these social idealists, sometimes with good intentions, have tried to overthrow. Pius X, as other Pontiffs before him, was obliged to warn and condemn them. Not being able to change the state of the world according to the ideals of their imaginary generosity, they say : " What remains of that compassion which impels us and so many others with us towards the people, making us seek to lessen their misery and relieve their wants ? "

We reply that it does still exist in its integrity, untrammelled by those errors which would have robbed it of its efficacity and might have made it most harmful, perfectly sound, free from all guile, self-interest and human imperfection. This ' demophilia ' has been in the world since the time of our Lord, and it came through Him. It is seen in our " good-day " and " good-bye," in unspoken regard for others, in insignificant actions, and if need be, in entire self-sacrifice. It is the shadow of a supernatural virtue, independent of any shade of politics ; without it the world would never have known peace, which is not so much the absence of the horrors of war, as a tender desire to help in all distress, a pity for all men. Its family name is charity, and its Christian name, " fraternal love." Whatever tends to diminish Christianity weakens this paramount virtue.

Leo XIII and Pius X, the Popes of the industrial age, have defined it with the greatest care in their Letters, and devoted a whole chapter in the Code of Social Economy to the rights and duties of workmen, employers and all Christians devoted to the Popular movement.

4. *Codification of Ecclesiastical Laws.*—A multiplicity of laws is a burden for any State, as well as for the citizens, who are at a loss to know what

is, or what is not, law. How are they to find the answer to some judicial question, when the codices are numberless and scattered about in various collections ? How far has recent legislation abrogated the old ? Must we not recognise the fact that some of the ancient laws, long since fallen into disuse, may be looked upon as abolished ? These difficulties have led the great number of states —Great Britain being an exception—to group together the existing laws, whether civil, repressive, commercial, or administrative, and thus to present them to magistrates and justiciaries in a single code, omitting what is obsolete and harmonising the provisions of different ages to the requirements of the present day.

The Church, more ancient than any state, was also suffering from the dispersion of her laws. It is true there were collections of Canon Law both official and non-official, but they were antiquated ; many contained useless documents, and from year to year there was an ever-increasing number of provisions which, having been replaced by new laws, were of no value except as memories. Already several of the Fathers assembled at the Vatican Council—among others, the Bishops of France—had expressed a wish that the Codification of the laws of the Church might be put in hand. So had the Bishops of the Province of

Naples, who said jokingly that to look for anything among these scattered laws was like " lifting the load of a camel."

Under the Pontificates of Pius IX and Leo XIII, certain chapters in Canon Law had been formulated in various decrees or constitutions in clear and precise terms. But the colossal task of revising the whole body of law was undertaken, set on foot, and pursued without respite to the end of his reign by Pius X, and Benedict XV witnessed and celebrated its completion. Pius X had the spirit of enterprise which is never so strongly marked as in very saintly men. What have they to fear ? They have made the sacrifice of themselves already, and all the success of their undertaking is in the Hands of the Most High. Moreover, this Pope, who had mounted all the steps of the ecclesiastical ministry, knew better than any one the need of the reform. He earnestly desired it, and therefore, as soon as he became Pope, he willed to carry it out. In the first year of his reign, at an audience given to Mgr. Gasparri, not yet a Cardinal, but Secretary of the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, and one of the ablest canonists in the world, these few words passed between the Pope and the Prelate :

" It is quite possible to make a Codification of Canon Law . . . "

" Yes, Most Holy Father."

" Very well then, do it ! "

The Pope had given so much thought to this great undertaking that he himself sketched a preliminary plan as to the best way of preparing the work of Codification. On the 19th of March 1904, the Feast of St. Joseph, his patron, he signed the *Motu proprio* " *Arduum munus*," in which, after recalling the serious inconvenience of having the text of the law scattered about in various collections, he declared his determination to classify and gather together in a single Code all Ecclesiastical Laws, to abolish what was obsolete and to adapt others to present conditions. He was, therefore, appointing a Commission of Cardinals, to whom he entrusted, under his supervision, " the direction and charge of the entire matter." The cardinals thus nominated were themselves to choose, subject to the approbation of the Pope, able theologians and canonists who would divide the different sections among themselves and review, clause by clause, all the provisions of Canon Law.

These consultors numbered seventeen at first, and later on twenty-five others were added. The principal part in the enterprise fell on the Commission and, in the Commission, on its Secretary, Mgr. Gasparri. His business was to follow the work of each section, to be amongst them the

representative and upholder of the unity of the undertaking, to co-ordinate the amendments proposed by one with the propositions suggested by another, and to be the link between the consultors and the Cardinals of the Commission.

The Pope desired to associate the Catholic Episcopate in an undertaking " so unique and of such exceptional importance." On the 25th of March 1904 a letter from the Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val, communicated to the bishops the wishes of the Pope. The archbishops were to take counsel with their Suffragans, and to forward to the Holy See, " after the lapse of four months, and in few words, their opinion and that of those prelates consulted by them, as to what it would be advisable to change or correct in the existing Canon Law."

This preliminary investigation, which was necessary before any steps could be taken, being of so general a nature, could not but produce very incomplete results. Imagine a circular advice from the Keeper of the Seals in any country inviting presidents of the courts of appeal to formulate criticisms on the whole body of that country's law ; how many points would necessarily be omitted in the returns received ! The most able critics only show the superiority of their judgment and the extent of their knowledge, when their attention is

concentrated on some special point, particularly if the matter has already been brought forward, formulated, and presented in a manner which enables them at a glance to discern its defects and advantages.

The truth of this observation was again verified in the preliminaries to the reform of Canon Law.

As soon as the observations of the bishops reached the Holy See, they were examined by the various sections of consultors. After a certain set of articles had been submitted to what may be called a preliminary examination, it was passed over to the Commission of Cardinals, who were empowered to make any alterations they thought fit. A report was then submitted to the Pope, to whom alone belongs the right of approbation or refusal. Passing thus from one scrutiny to another, certain articles remodelled according to the new Canon Law came back three or four times, or even oftener, before the consultors. The work went on without interruption ; even during the war it was not discontinued.

On the 20th of March 1912, the first proof of the new Code, drawn up by Cardinal Gasparri according to the observations provided by the specialists of both commissions, was sent to the bishops, with a request to return it, accompanied, if necessary, by fresh observations and suggestions.

This time the replies were very numerous and most interesting. These criticisms, after being summed up by the Secretary of the Commission, were submitted to the judgment of the cardinals.

At the time of Pius X's death, the revision of the Code was almost finished ; it was finally completed, after fourteen years of uninterrupted labour, under Benedict XV, who, in his Consistorial Allocution of the 4th of December 1916, announced the approaching promulgation of the entire work ; he ascribed to his predecessor the merit of having ventured on " what might be called an infinite labour " ; he declared that Pius X alone ought to be regarded as the author of the Code of Canon Law, and classed him with Innocent III, Honorius III, Gregory IX, those great Popes who had done most towards renewing ecclesiastical legislation. The Pope could not pass over in his discourse the Secretary of the Commission of Consultors, Cardinal Gasparri. " Not only," he said, " has he borne the weight of the undertaking from the outset, but he has shown in the compilation of the Code a very remarkable understanding and knowledge of law, a constancy in study and work which has never failed, even when he was necessarily occupied with important matters of State."

Six months later, on the Feast of Pentecost,

1917, in the midst of the world-war, Benedict XV promulgated this great legislative achievement.

5. *Frequent Communion.*—Pius X has been named by many : " The Pope of frequent Communion." The reform introduced by him in the Eucharistic life of the faithful exerts so extensive and beneficent an influence that it would be impossible to estimate it. The Pope desired the renewal of the world. In accordance with his motto it was from Christ that he asked it. To souls he said : " Come to Him every day ; I will take away the barriers " ; to children : " Come to Him as soon as you are old enough to understand and love Him."

Jansenism, of all heresies the most insidious, since it was addressed to fervent souls, began in Holland, passed into France, and thence into the world. To communicate but seldom because we are unworthy, to deprive ourselves of Communion out of respect for our Lord : such was the foundation of this attack against Divine Love.

By order of Pius X, the Sacred Congregation of the Council, on the 16th of December 1905, drew up the Decree : " On receiving daily the Most Holy Eucharist." After being submitted to the Sovereign Pontiff, it was promulgated on the 20th of December. It recalls the wish of the Council

of Trent : " The Holy Synod would desire that at every Mass the faithful who are present should communicate not only spiritually, by way of internal affection, but sacramentally, by the actual reception of the Eucharist."

It recalls the words of our Lord, when He likened the Bread of Heaven to the manna given daily for the feeding of the Hebrew people, and also the prayer He taught us in which we ask for " our daily bread," and consequently for that of the soul before that of the body. Then, legislating on the long-disputed question : what are the necessary dispositions for the frequent reception of Holy Communion ? the Congregation of the Council formulates the answer in nine paragraphs, the first of which contains this saving principle, which will be the cause of joy and progress to the end of time :

" Frequent and daily Communion, as a thing most earnestly desired by Christ our Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all the faithful, of whatever rank and condition of life ; so that no one, who is in the state of grace and who approaches the Holy Table with a right and devout intention, can lawfully be hindered therefrom."

The Decree soon led the Congregation of the Council to arrive at a further decision. The

Seventh Article lays down that frequent and daily Communion is especially to be promoted in religious institutes of all kinds, in ecclesiastical seminaries, and in all establishments for Christian education.

The question was at once asked, from various motives :

" Is frequent Communion then to be recommended to children who have made their first Communion ? "

The Congregation of the Council, on the 14th of February 1906, replied in the affirmative.

" This practice," it says, " has in its favour the ancient discipline of a great number of churches, in virtue of which the Sacrament of the Eucharist was given even to quite young children, a practice which, though fallen into disuse, has never been condemned by the Church.

" It is indeed necessary that children should be nourished by Christ before they are dominated by their passions, that they may be able with greater courage to repel the assaults of the devil, the flesh, and other enemies, both within and without."

This liberal legislation ran counter to many time-honoured customs, which yielded but slowly. Both ecclesiastics and laymen wrote to Rome : " Was the custom of allowing a whole year to pass between the first and second Communion to

be disapproved ? Can a little schoolboy, a child at that unthinking age, be allowed from the date of his first Communion frequently to renew an act of such eminent importance ? Was this really the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff ? "

The decision was not long in coming. On the 15th of September 1906, after developing in most moving terms the reason for an answer in the affirmative and refuting the objections, the Congregation of the Council formulated its decision, declaring that it had the approbation of the Pope.

" Frequent Communion according to the first Article of the Decree is to be recommended even to children, when they have once been admitted to the Holy Table, according to the rules laid down by the Roman Catechism. They are not to be excluded from frequent reception of Holy Communion but rather to be invited thereto, all customs existing to the contrary being rejected."

It only remained to define at what age children might and ought to be admitted to Communion. Local regulations had long been in opposition to Jesus Christ, preventing His coming into the souls of little children. The most innocent were deprived of the Sacrament of protection.

Was it then necessary to have sinned in order to receive our God ? Till the age of ten or twelve,

or even later, the little ones were kept away from Holy Communion.

Paucity of years was advanced by a deplorable timidity as an impediment preventing a child from receiving the grace awaiting it. Pius X wanted to help the dawning reason in its fight against instinct. The solution desired of him was found in ancient custom ; it underlay the recent Decrees ; he ordered it to be brought to light and explained. The Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments set forth the doctrine, removed all objections, and by the Decree of the 8th of August 1910, manifested the will of the Church in her capacity as treasurer of the Eucharist. A copy ought to be given to every young couple at their marriage, that they may realise one of their duties to come and the rights of the children who may be given them.

We give some quotations from these beautiful pages. The Congregation of the Sacraments recalls the fact that, from the beginning, the Church was careful to bring little children to Christ by Eucharistic Communion, and that, till the third century, it was the custom to administer the Eucharist to newly baptized infants under the form of a few drops of consecrated wine.

" Nor was it at baptism alone, but very frequently afterwards that the infants were refreshed by the divine food. For it was the custom of

some churches to give the Eucharist to the little ones immediately after the clergy, and elsewhere, after the Communion of the adults, to give them the fragments remaining over.

" This custom then grew obsolete in the Latin Church, and children began to take their place at the Holy Table only when they had a certain use of dawning reason, and some knowledge of this august Sacrament. This new discipline, which had already been accepted by some local synods, was confirmed by the solemn sanction of the Fourth General Council of the Lateran, held in 1215. . . ."

The Council of Trent confirmed the Lateran Decree :

" If any one denieth that all and each of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they have attained to the years of discretion, to communicate every year, at least at Easter, in accordance with the precept of Holy Mother Church, let him be anathema. . . ."

" In fixing this age of reason or of discretion, however, not a few errors and deplorable abuses have been introduced in the course of time. . . .

" According to the different local customs or opinions of men, the age for the first reception of the Eucharist was fixed at ten or twelve years in some places, at fourteen years, and even more, in others, and in the meantime children or youths

not having attained the prescribed age were forbidden to approach Eucharistic Communion.

" This custom whereby, under the pretext of safeguarding the honour due to the august Sacrament, the faithful are kept away from it, became the cause of many evils. For it came to pass that the innocence of the age of childhood, torn from the embrace of Christ, was not nourished by the sap of the interior life ; whence this also followed, that youth, deprived of its all-powerful protection, surrounded by so many snares, on losing its innocence fell headlong into vice before it had tasted of the sacred mysteries. Now, even if the first communion is preceded by more diligent instruction, and a careful sacramental confession—which is not everywhere the case—nevertheless the loss of baptismal innocence is ever to be regretted, a loss which, had the Eucharist been received in more tender years, might perhaps have been avoided. . . .

" But what is most serious is that in some places children who have not yet been admitted to their first Communion are not even allowed, when in imminent danger of death, to be strengthened by the Holy Viaticum, and at their death are carried to their grave like infants, and so are not assisted by the Church's Suffrages. . . .

" There is a testimony of the highest authority

in the words of St. Thomas Aquinas : ' As soon as children *begin to have a certain use* of reason, so as to be able to conceive devotion to this Sacrament (of the Eucharist), then may this Sacrament be given to them.'

" These words Ledesma thus explains : ' I say, following the consent of all, that the Eucharist must be given to all who have the use of reason, and however soon they may possess that use of reason ; even though the child only knows in a confused manner what it is doing. . . .'

" The Roman Catechism says : ' As for the age at which the sacred mysteries are to be given to children, none can determine it better than the father, and the priest to whom they confess their sins. It is their business to find out, by asking the children, whether they have acquired any knowledge of this admirable Sacrament, and have a desire for it.'

" From all this we gather that the age of discretion for Communion is that at which the child is able so to distinguish Eucharistic Bread from common and material bread, as to be able devoutly to approach the altar. Consequently no perfect knowledge of the things of faith is required, since some elements alone suffice, that is a *certain knowledge* ; nor is the full use of reason required, since the incipient use is enough, that is, *a certain use of reason.*

" Wherefore the deferring of Communion, and the fixing of a more advanced age for receiving it, is to be absolutely condemned, and the Apostolic See has many times condemned it. . . . "

The law of love and mercy thus promulgated by Pius X had been already practised by Mgr. Sarto, probably at Mantua, certainly at Venice. Mgr. Bressan, his friend from those far-off days, tells us that the Patriarch of Venice had a visit one day from a mother and her little girl. The child, who was only seven, had come to ask permission to make her first Communion the next day. She was asking something contrary to all existing custom, and she knew it.

The Cardinal put one question to her :

" How many natures are there in Jesus Christ ? "

" Two," replied the child, " the human and the Divine."

Immediately the Cardinal turned to his secretary and said :

" Write to the priest of St. Sylvester, and tell him to admit this little one to make her first Communion to-morrow. I will communicate her myself, as I shall have to be there for the ceremony."

The Decree of the Congregation of Sacraments ends by an instruction in eight Articles, laying down the obligations of children (and of parents)

in the matter of Confession, Communion and receiving the Viaticum.

The Eucharistic Decrees of Pius X are among the most important Acts ever put forth by the Papacy. They may well be called a stroke of genius. They have stirred feelings of gratitude in that multitude of Christian souls pulsating with the love of Christ, of every age, nation and clime, by whom alone the world is preserved from corruption. The manifestations of their gratitude poured into Rome. One of the most touching of these was the children's pilgrimage in 1912. Forms were sent out into different countries in which the children who would promise to go to Holy Communion on the 19th of March for the intentions of the Pope, Giuseppe Sarto, inscribed their names. In France alone there were 133,700 signatures. Then in April a pilgrimage, "the like of which had never been seen," started for Italy; it consisted of four hundred French children who were joined in Rome by children from the Roman parishes. Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli celebrated Mass for them at the Basilica of St. Mary Major and preached to them. The next day, Sunday, the 4th of April, the Hall of Consistory proving inadequate for the accommodation of the little ones, their relations and other pilgrims who had accompanied them, Pius X came down

to the Sistine Chapel and made the children pass in front of him two by two, giving to each a silver medal bearing the words : " *Catholiques et Français toujours. Dieu protège la France.*" Some of them gave him letters. Others, bolder still, spoke to him :

" Holy Father, cure my sister ! Pope, convert my father ! I want to be a priest, Holy Father."

Afterwards it was the turn of Pius X to speak —in French, of course.

" We read in the Gospel," he said, " that one day our Divine Redeemer called a little child like you, and placing him in the midst of His Apostles, said to them :

" ' *See that you despise not one of these little ones : for I say to you that their Angels in Heaven always see the Face of My Father, Who is in Heaven.*'

" Alas ! too often those heavenly guardians are saddened and horror-struck when they see evil and stains of sin in the souls entrusted to them. But the angels of children, without ever being distracted by their charge from the blessed vision of God Whom they see face to face in His Eternal Light, find Him again in their souls, where He is reflected as in a mirror of innocence, truth and purity.

" But if that is just as true of all as it was of the child like you whom our Lord called into the

midst of His Apostles, what would He have said of you, dear little children, who have received His very Self, His Divinity and Sacred Humanity, in Holy Communion ! . . . What would He have said of your holy angels, above whom you have been raised by participation in the Holy Eucharist, since they have not received the grace that has been granted to you, of being nourished with Jesus Christ ! . . . "

Pius X, who had been in charge of a parish before being set over all the souls in the world, recommended the children to " go to catechism classes for a long time yet, to go to Communion often, if possible every day ; " he wished that " they might be transformed into apostles of the Glory of God."

The children, as they went out, turned back towards the Vatican, while many, waving their hands, cried :

" Long live our good Pope ! We will come back and see you again ! "

A few years later, when the whole of Europe was at war, his successor, Pope Benedict XV, declared that " nothing was nearer to his heart than to have the Decrees, *Sacra Tridentina Synodus* and *Quam singulari*, which had been promulgated by order of his predecessor, faithfully and piously observed," and asked that Catholic children throughout Europe should receive Holy

Communion for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff. (Declaration by Cardinal Gasparri, 26th June 1916.)

At the same time, in that part of the field best known to us, since it was our own, there were strange and unaccustomed happenings ; men on the eve of battle going to Communion at all hours of the day or night. Military chaplains, during the passing of an assaulting party, would recite the Act of Contrition and pronounce the words of Absolution, whilst numbers of hands in the squad or company were raised to make the sign of the Cross, perhaps the last they would ever make. The men of the second line, or those in the rear, in camps, ruined churches, or dug-outs, would assist at Benediction or Mass, confess to a soldier priest or military chaplain and receive Holy Communion. How many have witnessed these scenes, which were worthy of the brightest days of faith !

One of these eye-witnesses, a military chaplain, ended his narration by these words : " . . . If those who had compassion on the multitude and gave them to eat, could witness these moving scenes, they would rejoice at what they have done. The heart of Pius X would thrill with joy to know that his great reform was being propagated, and that under the cannon-balls were falling the

obstacles which had kept souls away from the Holy Table . . . " (Abbé Thellier de Poncheville.)

Now that some time has elapsed since the beginning of the century when Pius X published his Eucharistic Decrees, we can take count of the first-fruits produced by them. There is no doubt about it. In the towns of France, especially in the large towns where religious instruction is carried out more systematically, frequent Communion has become habitual among an increasing number of Christians ; on certain days, such as the first Friday of the month and Feasts of Our Lady, it is clear that the desire expressed by the Council of Trent, to wit that those who assist at Mass should also communicate, is being observed by the faithful. The practice has increased in nearly all colleges. Thousands, hundreds of thousands of children are no longer obliged to wait till the age of ten or twelve to receive our Lord, of Whom they are more worthy than their elders ; the number of Paschal Communions in large schools increases every year ; and if an inquiry were made throughout the Catholic world, it is certain that like results would be noted everywhere. A friend living in the United States of America has told us of a university numbering two thousand six hundred students, ranging in age from eighteen to

twenty-five, of whom one thousand assist at Mass and receive Holy Communion every day.

This act of Pius X was the beginning of a new era. After all, it is purely a question of souls. Are they to belong to God, in Whom is the fulness of life and youth? or to that other, who is destruction? Pius X has brought them close to the Heart of Christ the King. At a time when the danger was greater, he gave them greater courage. What will be the future for which this order of things is preparing us?

Nourished by Jesus Christ, these nations—or fractions of nations—what will they become? The answer can be given in a few words. They will be like the first Christians, only more numerous.

6. *Separation of Church and State.*—The latter years of Leo XIII saw the beginning of the definite assault being prepared in France by Free Thinkers against the Catholic Church, which resulted in the separation of Church and State. The list of anti-religious laws, passed by the French Parliament, under his Pontificate, reveals a premeditated plan for the destruction of the faith. There is no need to reproduce the whole programme in order to explain the mental agitation that prevailed everywhere, the heat of electoral contests, the free vent

allowed, in newspapers and public speeches, to calumnies against the Church, the exodus of numerous religious congregations of men and women—not formally exiled, but forced to depart by the difficulty, even impossibility, of living the conventual life to which they were called. To measure the distance covered during the period of which we are speaking, it will suffice to glance at the chief boundaries which serve as landmarks :—

1882 (28th March), a law "secularising" primary schools, by omitting religious instruction from the enumeration of subjects taught.

1884 (27th July), a law establishing divorce, which had been suppressed in the Civil Code by a law of 1816.

1884 (14th August), a law suppressing the public prayers at the opening of Parliament.

1884 (29th December), a law of increment, striking at the revenue of communities and religious associations.

1886 (30th October), a law excluding members of congregations from giving public instruction.

1889 (15th July), a law touching the organisation of the army, imposing military service on clerics.

1901 (1st July), a law proclaiming liberty of association, but excluding from the common right religious congregations, for which previous legal authorisation was required.

1903 (March), refusal by the Chamber of Deputies to examine demands for authorisation presented by fifty-one congregations of men (twenty-five of which were educational) and eighty-one teaching congregations of women.

1904 (7th July), a law prohibiting any sort or description of instruction to be given by members of religious congregations, and ordering the suppression, within ten years, of all congregations devoted exclusively to education.

We cannot help feeling some astonishment and indignation when we see that, during a reign glorious in so many respects, Leo XIII was unable to obtain any justice for the cause of religion. Neither his genius, recognised at times even by the enemies of the Church, his constancy in upholding the French Protectorate in the East, his continual and manifest desire to come to some agreement, nor his republican policy (*Ralliement*) which would have brought back to him so many public statesmen had they been merely republicans, as they asserted ; nothing was able to disarm the hatred, secret or open, against the Church herself. The great Pope received no other recompense than empty compliments for his goodwill and his sacrifices. The influence of his beneficent action made itself felt in the domain of Christian thought by means of his striking Encyclicals ; he turned

the attention of well-meaning men towards the truths of the social order, to an apostolate among working-men, to the traditional philosophy of the Church ; and, if at the present day we rejoice to see the highest intellects reaching out after Jesus Christ and finding Him, and the multitudes who are devoting their lives to the good of their brethren, there rises up before our minds the figure of him who gave back to scholars, as their master, St. Thomas of Aquin, and signed the Charter of future peace in the Encyclical *Rerum novarum*.

Pius X began his reign when persecution was on the increase. He had, for France, a mysterious and most touching appreciation ; though he had never visited her, the French nation was among those he specially loved ; he knew above all that the word spoken of her by Cardinal Pie was true : " To fight against God is contrary to her nature."

What was to be done ? To whom could he appeal ? Amongst so many unreliable personages, the Pope sought for one who had influence and would understand a just remonstrance.

Four months after his election to the Papacy, he wrote a letter, dated the 2nd of December 1903, to the President of the French Republic, M. Loubet, who as a lawyer had long been familiar with questions of law and politics. The Pope deplored the exodus of those thousands of " religious, both

men and women . . . constrained to seek refuge and liberty in foreign lands " ; he reminded him of the Government's refusal to examine the requests for authorisation that had been presented in conformity with the new law, of the attacks against the Pope, suspension of ecclesiastical stipends, the prolonged vacancies in a large number of Episcopal Sees, and the threat, shortly to take effect, of depriving all members of religious congregations—even when authorised—of the right of giving education, whether higher, secondary or primary.

Then with a sorrow and resolution that were quite legitimate, he thus addressed the head of the State :

" Seeing this long series of measures ever growing in their hostility to the Church, it would seem, M. le Président, that the intention was, as some believe, not only imperceptibly to prepare the way for a total separation of Church and State, but, were it possible, to take from France that character of Christianity which has been her glory in the past. We cannot persuade Ourselves that those who preside over her destinies are nursing such projects, which would inevitably cause the most serious religious disturbances at home, and, abroad, a diminution of the prestige and moral influence of France."

Then followed those words, in which Pius X, loyal and fearless, warned the President that, if ever the separation of Church and State came to pass, no hesitation would any longer be possible.

"As for Ourselves," he said, "should such deplorable measures ever be taken, Our heart, tenderly affected towards the eldest daughter of the Church, would be pierced with grief: nevertheless We are obliged to add unequivocally that the Holy See, forced to such extremities, full of confidence in the vitality of the Church in France, would never fail in any of the duties imposed upon it by its Divine mission and by the circumstances of the case, leaving to others the responsibility for whatever consequences might follow."

The answer was not received till the 27th of February 1904. It does not bear the same stamp of greatness.

M. Loubet declared that he "desired the maintenance of religious peace and the loyal execution of the Concordat," but that the Sovereign Pontiff had made a mistake in writing to *him*. "The President of the Republic must remain intact in his constitutional irresponsibility concerning measures taken by the Government, and abstain from any personal action."

Two months later M. Loubet came to Rome (24th of April 1904) to return the visit of King

Victor Emmanuel to Paris, and he did not present himself at the Vatican, where he knew he would not be received.

The President was, moreover, well aware that the Holy See would be obliged to protest against a visit made in Rome to the King of Italy by the head of a Catholic nation.

All the governments knew the regulations relative to this matter, drawn up since 1870. In the summer of 1903, during the last days of Leo XIII, when the project of a journey to Rome had been discussed in the papers, Cardinal Rampolla had even issued an order to the Nuncio in Paris to present himself to M. Delcassé, to remind him how such an action would be regarded, and what would be its inevitable result. The official *White Book* on the Separation resumes what passed between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Leo XIII's Secretary of State. From the outset, the principle of papal policy on this matter was formulated.

" What has been said openly on more than one occasion, and what the Nuncio communicated to M. Delcassé in the audience of June 1903, must be repeated here : the Holy See, who never interferes with any State in its policy, either Home or Foreign, when the interests of the Church are not concerned, has never in any way disapproved of

or hindered the relations between Italy and France ; on the contrary, it rejoices in all that strengthens the spirit of brotherhood among the nations and removes occasions of international conflict and war. Consequently, if in view of promoting friendly relations between the two nations, M. le Président Loubet had visited King Victor Emmanuel in any other Italian city, the Holy See would certainly have kept silence. But after the tragic events of 1870 and until a just reparation has been made in such a manner as to guarantee the entire and settled independence of the Chief Pastor of the Church in regard to all civil authority, the Holy See cannot refrain from protesting when the head of a Catholic nation, especially if he is himself a Catholic, comes to Rome to pay an official State-visit to the King of Italy, in an apostolic Palace, approving by his action the spoliation inflicted on the Roman Pontiff and the abnormal character of his present situation."

As the visit of M. Loubet to Rome took place in spite of these remonstrances, the new Pope's Secretary of State could not but protest. This he did on the 24th of April 1904, reproducing almost word for word Cardinal Rampolla's protest of a few months earlier. Both are published in the Appendices of the *White Book* ; they give the lie to the fable that the attitude of Cardinal Merry

del Val was different from that of his predecessor ; it was exactly the same. The French Government who, it may be thought, was seeking a pretext for a rupture, considered the present moment unfavourable, but the pontifical document, which was not intended for public circulation, having been published through an indiscretion, orders were despatched to the French Ambassador to the Holy See to go on leave. Before he left Rome, the Ambassador, M. Nisard, declared formally that his departure signified neither rupture nor interruption nor suspension of diplomatic relations between the French Government and the Holy See ; consequently he designated M. de Courcel as provisionary *chargé d'affaires*, and announced that M. de Navenne, as titular *chargé d'affaires*, would arrive at Rome in a couple of days' time.

The rupture was only deferred. It was finally brought about by two questions of Canon Law. Two bishops, those of Laval and Dijon, being called to Rome to defend their cause, refused to obey the summons of the Pope. M. Combes' Government maintained that the Pope had no right to communicate directly with the bishops in such a case, or to represent to them that a further refusal would draw down upon them ecclesiastical censures. Rome replied patiently and clearly that " in no one of the seventeen Articles of the

Concordat is it expressed, either in the spirit or in the letter, that the Holy See cannot, without the previous consent of the Government, counsel a bishop to renounce his diocese for his greater good and that of the diocese itself, or summon him to Rome to give an account of his conduct."

The Cardinal Secretary of State, by whom the letters and notes addressed to the French Government were signed, observed, moreover, that the Roman Pontiff " could not make a concession of this nature without failing in his sacred duties as Chief Pastor of the Church ; for, though no one denies the fact that the bishops in France ought to have with the Government the necessary relations laid down by the Concordat, nevertheless in their jurisdiction they depend on the Sovereign Pontiff, who has conferred this jurisdiction upon them by canonical investiture, and who maintains them in it ; and this dependence he cannot subject to the consent of civil authority."

Were not these undeniable truths ? But the Government was pursuing other ends, and nothing could stop it. A verbal message of the 30th of July 1904, from the French *chargé d'affaires* at Rome, signified to the Holy See the rupture of diplomatic relations.

The *White Book*, a few pages of which we have analysed, contains in the ninth chapter two

observations which will be considered by every honest man as an exact summary of this debate "concerning two bishoprics," and an anticipation of the judgment of history.

"To sum up, the French Government has brought to a close its secular diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

"I.—Because the Holy See, after informing the Government, had summoned to Rome two bishops that they might free themselves from grave charges of a purely ecclesiastical order, of which they had been publicly accused;

"II.—Because the Apostolic Nuncio had notified to Mgr. le Nordez that the Holy See had ordered the provisional suspension of clerical ordinations for reasons of simple prudence . . .

". . . It will be easy for impartial public opinion and for history to attribute to these motives their just value and to judge at whose door lies the true responsibility of a rupture equally disastrous to the interests of the Church and of the State."

The breach of diplomatic relations paved the way for, and showed the near approach of, the total Separation of Church and State. This measure was passed the following year by Parliament (Law of 11th December 1905). Without any previous negotiations and in defiance of the laws

of justice, the French Government denounced the bilateral contract, which is known as the Concordat. It declared itself discharged from the obligation of paying the stipends of the clergy (a provision laid down, it is true, in the Concordat, but constituting in reality only a partial reparation, reduced to a minimum, for the spoliation of the property of the Church); endowments for *mensa* or *fabrique* (the upkeep of the clergy or of the Church buildings), in order that Masses might be said in perpetuity for the souls of the founders: all disappeared in the same gulf. The churches, by the will of the party in power, were declared common property; the priest was only allowed to use the edifice under surveillance; an inventory of all church furniture was to be made by State agents, and no provision was made in the text to prevent the functionary from opening the tabernacles. There were also in this law several other indefensible propositions, but the principal of these was the public abjuration made by the Government of the Republic to this effect:

"The Republic neither recognises, finances, nor grants subsidies to any form of religious worship." Thus, the Republic repudiated its debts, a measure which has never been considered honest; worse than all, it transgressed that first of all laws—that nations have the obligation of worshipping God,

whatever may be the form of their government.

The Law of Separation set up associations for religious worship (*associations cultuelles*) who were to take possession of what remained of Church property, to administer it, to pour the capital—carefully limited—into the coffers of the State, and to give the Prefect an account of all receipts and expenditure. The State was under no obligation to transmit this property to associations directed by the bishop only. It could do as it pleased. The Church's hierarchy was only one of "the separated things"; no one troubled about it.

Immediately after the promulgation of the law, Government agents, receivers of property, tax-gatherers, police agents, constables and locksmiths, began to make the inventory of the sixty thousand churches of France. Christian France felt deeply the insult paid to God and to the faithful. In the towns, notably in Paris, and in many villages the Catholics defended their churches. The distress was at its height.

The Pope could not but intervene. Even before the Separation Act had been passed, in his reply to the greetings of the Sacred College for his Feast on the 18th of March 1904, he had complained of the unjust measures already taken or being prepared against the religious in France.

At the Consistory of the 14th of November the same year, after giving a summary of the strife stirred up by the Government of the Republic with regard to the nomination of bishops, and the arbitrary proceedings employed by the same Government, in depriving bishops and priests of their stipends without any inquiry, without giving them a chance to make any defence, without any judgment, he said :

" We have no hope that this succession of attacks against the Church will soon come to an end. . . . Be it so ! whatever measures are in store, they will find us prepared and fearless."

And when the iniquitous act was accomplished, the Pope kept his word.

In France, and perhaps elsewhere, there were not wanting people who said that the Pope should have replied earlier to such violent and reiterated assaults against religion.

About this time, when some one was questioning him in that spirit of affectionate respect to which much liberty is permitted, Pius X replied :

" Do you not feel that the time has come when our Lord Jesus Christ is going to take the affairs of France into His own Hands ; yes, those two Divine Hands, one of which casts down to the ground, if need be, while the other lifts up, revives and purifies."

Pius X had heard by telephone that the Law of Separation was passed. " Then, Most Holy Father, what have you done ? "

The Pope answered simply :

" *Pregato :* I have prayed." He continued :

" Perhaps the hour has come for Christians in France to give our Lord more of their time, more suffering and more love.

" France will not be separated from Him. Remember, throughout her history, in spite of all efforts, she has never forsaken the true Church. And there are so many *buoni*, *buonissimi* among you ! Do you count as nothing all the suffering, and the sacrifices, and the martyrs there have been already for faith and liberty ? . . ." (From the private notes of Camille Bellaigue, after the Audience of the 7th of January 1906.)

The public reply was given in two Encyclicals on the happenings in France, both of which appeared in 1906.

The first, the Encyclical, *Vehementer*, of the 11th of February, addressed to the " Archbishops, Bishops and Clergy and the whole nation of France " denounced and condemned, in the breach of the Concordat the omission of the prescribed forms ; in the Separation of Church and State the principle itself.

" For you," he said, addressing the French

bishops, "it will assuredly have been neither a novelty nor a matter for surprise, witnesses as you have been of the numerous and formidable blows aimed by public authority at religion. You have seen the sanctity and indissolubility of Christian marriage violated by laws in direct opposition to them; the secularisation of schools and hospitals; clerics torn from their studies and ecclesiastical discipline, and forced into military service; religious congregations dispersed and despoiled, and most of their members reduced to utter destitution. These legal measures have been followed by others, as you well know: abolishing the law prescribing public prayers at the opening of Parliament and the law courts; suppressing the traditional signs of mourning on board vessels on Good Friday; deleting from the legal oath everything that gave it a stamp of religion; banishing from the courts, from schools, the army, navy, and all other public institutions, every act and emblem which served in any way as a reminder of religion. These measures and others besides, which have by degrees and in very deed separated the Church from the State, were nothing else than landmarks on the road to entire and official separation; the promoters themselves have not hesitated to recognise this openly many times. . . . Kindness, services rendered, efforts on the part of Our

Predecessor as well as on Our own, all have been in vain. . . . Therefore, in an hour of so grave consequence for the Church, sensible of the apostolic office laid upon Us, We have considered it a duty to speak and to open Our soul to you, Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and your people, whom We have always cherished with tender affection, but whom at this moment, as is right, We love more tenderly than ever before."

Thus the Pope did what he could to avert this law.

Now he is about to condemn it.

" That it is necessary to separate the State from the Church," he says, " is a proposition absolutely false, a most pernicious error."

What is the principle pleaded as a pretext for the separation of the State from the Church ?

It is this : the State must not recognise any religion ; and that is a grave insult to God, the Creator of man and Founder of human society, to Whom is due not only private but also public and social worship.

" Besides, such a proposition is a clear negation of the supernatural order. It limits the action of the State to the sole pursuit of public prosperity during this life, which is only the proximate end of political societies, and it takes no count whatever . . . of their ultimate end, which is eternal

beatitude offered to man when this brief life shall have run its course. . . .

" This proposition also upsets the order established by God in the world, which demands a harmonious concord between the two societies. . . ." Once the harmony is lost, the occasions for strife will be multiplied and souls " cast into dire perplexity."

The Sovereign Pontiffs have never ceased to refute and condemn the doctrine of the Separation of Church and State. Pius X quotes, in particular, this passage from the Encyclical, *Immortale Dei* (Leo XIII) :

" Human society cannot, without sinning, act as if God did not exist, or refuse to practise religion, as if it were a matter alien or useless to it."

One grave injustice was to be followed by another. When the bonds of the Concordat were broken, the natural consequence would have been to leave to the Church her independence.

This the State did not do ; it sought to place the Church under the domination of the civil power, and in this way :

The Church, says the Encyclical, is " the Mystical Body of Christ, a body governed by *pastors* and *doctors* . . . an *unequal* society, that is to say, a society composed of two categories of persons, the *pastors* and the flock, those who

occupy some rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy, and the multitude of the faithful. . . . Contrary to these principles, the Law of Separation assigns the administration and guardianship of public worship, not to the hierarchical body instituted by our Saviour, but to an association of lay persons. On this association is conferred a juridical form and character, and in all that has to do with religious worship it alone is held to possess civil rights and responsibilities in the eyes of the State. It is this association which will arrange for the use of temples and sacred edifices; it will take possession of all ecclesiastical property, both buildings and furniture; it will dispose, though only temporarily, of episcopal residences, presbyteries and seminaries; and it will administer the revenues, regulate the collections and receive the alms and legacies destined for religious worship.

"As to the body of the hierarchy, there is absolute silence concerning it. And though the law prescribes that the *associations cultuelles* are to be constituted conformably to the general rules of organisation of that form of worship which they are proposing to promote, yet care is taken to declare that in all differences which may arise concerning property, it is the Council of State alone which is competent.

"These *associations cultuelles* themselves, there-

fore, will be so dependent on civil authority that the ecclesiastical authority, it is clear, can have no power whatever over them. How harmful all these provisions must be for the Church, and how contrary to her rights and Divine constitution, is apparent to any one at a glance."

Moreover, by this law were set many obstacles to the practice of religion and the preaching of Catholic faith and morals; the Pope alludes to this and shows, in the last place, that the State, in virtue of the separation, claims to exonerate itself from its obligation of providing for the needs of religious worship. But this it cannot do without sinning against justice, as is proved by history. The new law will have a most deadly effect on France, it will stir up violent passions, and turn the country upside down.

Then the Pope solemnly condemns the Law of Separation, declaring that "it can never be used as a pretext for crippling the indefeasible and immutable rights of the Church."

His noble words must be quoted in full:

"Therefore, recalling Our apostolic charge, and sensible of the imperative duty incumbent on Us of defending the inviolable and sacred rights of the Church against every assault, and maintaining them in their absolute integrity; in virtue of the supreme authority conferred on Us by God, and

for the motives explained above, We censure and We condemn the law passed in France for the separation of Church and State, as a grave offence against God, Whom it publicly denies by establishing the principle that the Republic recognises no religion. We censure and condemn it as a violation of natural law, the law of nations, and the public fidelity due to treaties ; as contrary to the Divine Constitution of the Church, to her essential rights and liberty ; as a subversion of justice and a trampling underfoot of the rights of the property acquired by manifold titles as well as through the Concordat. We censure and condemn it as gravely injurious to the dignity of this Apostolic See, to Our Person, to the episcopate, the clergy and all French Catholics."

The Pope brought the Encyclical to a close by these words of Divine hope :

" We have . . . the confidence, verified times without number, that Jesus Christ will never forsake His Church ; that He will never deprive her of His unfailing support. Therefore, We have no fear on her account. Her strength is from God, from Whom she derives her immutable stability, as the experience of past centuries triumphantly proves."

As soon as he had put his signature to this grand lesson of justice, the Pope, drawing upon a right

of which those who framed the Law of Separation were unable to deprive him, nominated, without any impediment whatever, sixteen French bishops, and called on them to govern the sixteen vacant dioceses.

A further decision was expected. Towards the end of the Encyclical, *Vehementer*, Pius X had announced to the Catholics of France that he would in due time give them instructions as to their future course of action.

What would these be ? Chanceries, politicians, the press, society discussed the question for months. Although the wording of the Encyclical was a clear enough answer, many professed to doubt whether the Pope would have the courage —imprudence, as they called it—to resist the action of the *associations cultuelles*. Some, who were the acknowledged or secret authors of the law, thought that Pius X, having condemned the principle, would be content with this striking public manifesto and, to avoid drawing down upon the Church of France the terrible trial of utter destitution which already menaced her, would resign himself to counselling the Catholics at least to make trial of the system of *cultuelles*. Others, who were in no wise enemies, but who looked on the Church from too human a point of view, said :

" How are we to resist ? They will ruin every charitable institution, reduce the clergy to beggary, and possibly close the churches ! Is Mass to be said in private houses or barns ? It was all very well in the old days, but now, with the want of faith, and the divisions among the people, nothing would be gained but a prolongation of the religious perplexity, not indeed everywhere, but in some of the provinces. And what more ? Perhaps it will come to blows, in which one side is condemned beforehand to be beaten, and religion in France will go on diminishing, until there are no more priests or seminaries or sacraments."

Others again, having a firm faith and devotion, nursed an illusion on the subject of revolutionary psychology. For many years accustomed to parliamentary defeats, led by their nature and even their virtue to disbelieve in implacable hatred, as also to exaggerate the value of the small concessions that now and again they had been able to obtain, they persuaded themselves that some " agreement " would be arrived at, some arrangement, and that the *association cultuelle*, amended, not by the legislation which had formed it but by some indirect means, would become acceptable, and—who knows ?—even beneficial.

Indeed, many attempts were made, many clandestine meetings held, and as the attitude of

Pope Pius X continued to disturb the thoughts of the Government, various propositions appeared to be accepted by the ministry, notably the following : The Council of State would draw up rules, a practical commentary on the Law of Separation, by which, in a certain measure, the authority of the Catholic hierarchy would be safeguarded. A jurisprudence would be created to give satisfaction to Catholics. In this way there would be " legal and canonical " associations —an involuntary but unequivocal mistake. Revolutionary legislation never goes back, short of being compelled, on any destructive principle at which it has arrived. It is easier to change jurisprudence than to alter a law. The law remained, notwithstanding the proposed mitigation, and with and in it, the principle of shutting their eyes to inconvenient truth, which those who framed it had made to pass into it from their own hearts.

The Pope had a higher opinion of the priests and the faithful of France. He believed and he knew that France " would never be separated from Christ." The consequences of a refusal to accept the *cultuelles* were going to be very painful. Few nations, perhaps, could have stood such a trial. The first baptized, the eldest daughter of the Church, by the grace of God would go through with it and come out purer and spiritually stronger.

A grievous decision, it was the most glorious homage that a Pope could pay to the Church of France. He judged her capable of heroism, and he refused to accept the *cultuelles*.

Before publishing this dreaded and yet liberating Act, he had consulted the French bishops, gathered together in a Plenary Council at Paris, and was therefore able to say to them in his second letter :

"We see that We may fully confirm by Our apostolic authority the all but unanimous decision of your Assembly." On this essential point, to wit, the repudiation of the *associations cultuelles* as established by law, Pius X had, indeed, only to ratify the opinion of the French bishops assembled at Paris, who, practically unanimously—seventy-four votes against two—had declared against them. This being so, there remained a subordinate matter to be settled. Should any regard be paid to the various systems proposed, which were to transform the condemned associations into new ones, conformable, so it was claimed, to the demands of ecclesiastical law ? A majority of the bishops in the same Assembly (forty-five votes against twenty-seven), thought it advisable, but the Pope decided otherwise. He, the Supreme Head, considered that the proposed modifications, mere corrections of procedure or jurisprudence, would

not ensure adequate security to Catholics. In the same Encyclical, *Gravissimo officii*, of the 10th of August 1906, which condemned the *cultuelles* of the law passed by Parliament, he rejected also the associations suggested as "*canonico-légales*," declaring that only one modification could be accepted, that of the law itself. Let those who made the law unmake it and remake it!

"The law remaining such as it is, We declare that it is not permissible to make trial of this new kind of association."

The impression made throughout the world was immense. Those who had thought to destroy the Church or to fetter her by causing a division, found that she had paid the price of her liberty with all her property, and that she was of another world than theirs. They despoiled her conscientiously. Even to this day, twenty years after the date of *Gravissimo officii*, the *Journel Officiel* is still publishing reports of the spoliation of the poor —living or dead, by a State equally unrepentant and unforeseeing.

Catholics have kept up their generosity. They have supported their schools, hospitals, *patronages*, seminaries, priests and curates. They still pay the diminished income by which the clergy live, and priests still suffer from the suppression of the budget for public worship; but they have never

abandoned their ministry, nor have they even murmured against the noble cause which has reduced them to a state approaching destitution.

During the interval between the two Encyclicals of 1906, a ceremony, probably unique, took place in St. Peter's, Rome ; on Quinquagesima, the last Sunday in February, the Pope consecrated fourteen French bishops, who had been nominated directly by him.

On their arrival, they were welcomed by Pius X with great affection ; to the first three he had given a pectoral cross, and as Mgr. Grellier, Bishop-Designate of Laval, arrived later, the Pope said : " Blessed are they who come last," and presented him with the pectoral cross, gold chain and a ring.

In the apse of the Basilica, at right angles to the altar of St. Peter's Chair, another altar of great length had been erected. The Sovereign Pontiff was to celebrate Mass on the former ; on the other the fourteen bishops were to begin their Mass, and after the Gospel they were all to go up to the Pontifical Altar, and stand seven on the right and seven on the left of the Pope, reciting the prayers, consecrating and finishing the Mass with him. In the front row of the assistants, most of whom were French, and who might be computed at about four thousand, there were five cardinals : Rampolla, Merry del Val, di Pietro, Mathieu,

Macchi. Behind them those who lived in Rome recognised the Pope's two sisters. The two Archbishops of Rheims and Auch assisted the bishops elect. Act eight o'clock, as Pius X entered St. Peter's on foot, accompanied by his suite, his guards and the fourteen bishops elect, the choirs of the Sistine Chapel broke into the glorious *Tu es Petrus* of Don Lorenzo Perosi, while all present fell on their knees at the passing of the "Man in White," who had been the first to stretch out a helping hand to the afflicted Church of France.

We here quote an account by Mgr. Pasquier, Rector of the Catholic University of Angers, an eye-witness of this magnificent function :

"As soon as the Pope had finished his prayer at the foot of the altar and put on his Pontifical vestments, he seated himself on his throne, and one of the assistant archbishops presented to him the fourteen elect, who knelt in front of him and read aloud a formula of the Oath of Fidelity. The wording of the oath is very solemn and earnest ; it recalls semi-barbarous times, when armed force was endangering the safety of the Pope. . . . After the Oath, the Pope began in very touching terms to examine the dispositions of the elect, and each one replied to his interrogations : 'I will.'

"'Will you regulate your conduct according to the Holy Scriptures ?' 'I will.'

" ' Will you teach both by word and example ? ' ' I will.' . . .

" After this examination of the conduct and intentions of the future bishop, the Pope examines his faith in the Trinity, the Redemption, the Holy Scriptures, the Divine Mission of the Church, the Resurrection of the flesh, and Life Everlasting."

The ceremonies followed one another according to the prescribed order. While the Litany of the Saints was being sung, the fourteen bishops elect prostrated on the ground. At the end they rose and the Pope imposed on them his hands, pronouncing the words, " Receive the Holy Ghost " : then with holy chrism he anointed their heads and hands. To each newly-consecrated bishop he gave the pastoral staff and the blessed ring.

After this the Mass was begun at the two altars.

" At the Offertory, the Newly-Consecrated brought to the Pope the matter of the sacrifice they were to offer together : two loaves and two small casks of wine. It took one back to the Primitive Church, when the faithful themselves used to bring for Consecration the bread with which they were to be communicated.

" After the Offertory, the fourteen Newly-Consecrated placed themselves on either side of the Pope, seven on his right, seven on his left, and

recited aloud with him the prayers of the Mass to the end. It was most impressive, that Mass said by fifteen bishops, one of whom was the Pope; it reminded me of the Apostles surrounding our Lord at the Last Supper. I heard it said, by one well qualified to judge of the beauty of religious functions, that the most touching moment was that when, amid an intense silence, the voices of the fourteen bishops, dominated and directed by that of the Pope, were heard pronouncing the Words of Consecration, and the Host and the Chalice were raised above the altar. . . . Generally, at the Consecration of a Bishop, only one large host is consecrated and it is divided in half for the Communion of the Consecrator and the Newly-Consecrated, but on this occasion, because of the unusual number of bishops, the Pope had before him eight hosts and three chalices. It was also most impressive to see the Pope at the Communion, after communicating himself, giving to each of the fourteen Newly-Consecrated the Sacred Host and the Chalice. We might have imagined ourselves present at the Last Supper, when our Lord gave to His disciples the Consecrated Bread and the Chalice of His Blood."[1]

[1] Conference given to the Catholic University of Angers, Tuesday in Holy Week, 1906.

A few months passed. On the 17th of December, the aged Cardinal Richard was forced, in consequence of the laws of spoliation, to leave the palace which until then had been the residence of the Archbishops of Paris.

On the 2nd of January 1907, the morrow of the day when men of civilised nations are accustomed to exchange good wishes, a law was promulgated which may be summed up as follows: Since Catholics have not organised *associations cultuelles* during the course of 1906, all the confiscations of property, both buildings and furniture, all the deprivations of pension or of rights of usage, previously inscribed in the Law of Separation under the form of a threat, will now be put into force.

On the 5th, Pius X, indignant at so many calumnies hurled by the irreligious not only against himself, but against his children in France who were suffering persecution, published a new Encyclical:

"The grave occurrences which are following closely one upon the other in your noble country lead Us once again to address the Church of France, in order to support her in her trials and console her in her grief."

The Pope refuted two sophisms, weak and contemptible, that were being circulated: "The

Church," he said, " does not desire persecution, as some pretend ; for persecution is unjust ; the Church has not abandoned ecclesiastical property, the property pertaining to religious worship, to the poor, to the departed, but it has been taken from her, and the real truth is none other than this :

" Insidiously placed in a position where she must choose between material ruin and an avowed attempt against her Constitution, which is of Divine origin . . . " she has refused, " at the price of poverty, to allow the work of God in her to be tampered with."

He reminds them that all the snares laid by the Church's enemies have failed to separate the bishops of France from the Pope, and that he had never doubted of their fidelity to the Apostolic See.

" None the less, We experience," he wrote to the bishops, " immense joy at the magnificent example you are giving by your action, and while praising you publicly before the whole Church, We give thanks from the depths of Our heart to the Father of mercies, the Author of all good."

Ten days later, the bishops sent their reply. For the third time in less than a year they were gathered together in a plenary Assembly. They proposed to deliberate this time on the project of an administrative contract between mayors and

parish priests, by which the former should grant to the latter the use of places of worship.

The project, however, was speedily abandoned. The Assembly could no longer meet at the Archbishop's Palace. The Cardinal of Paris accepted the invitation of the Comte de Franqueville, and the French cardinals, archbishops and bishops held their sessions at the Château de la Muette, from the 15th to the 19th of January. Before setting to work, they desired to draw up an Address to Pius X. The Pope had asked of them obedience and, against his will, poverty. They therefore thanked him for his confidence in them, and assured him of their " entire and loyal adherence to the judgment passed by His Holiness on the legislation concerning religious matters, begun in the law of 1905, and lately continued in that of the 2nd of January 1907."

The Address had to be taken to Rome, and for this honourable mission Cardinal Richard chose Camille Bellaigue.

Arriving at the Vatican on the 18th of January, the envoy of the Archbishop of Paris was received in audience at once. The Pope was awaiting him in his library.

" Most Holy Father, in spite of my unworthiness, I have the great honour of bringing to Your Holiness an Address from the Bishops of France."

" We sat down, the Pope at his writing-table, I in the armchair at his left. It was eleven o'clock in the morning. The sun was streaming into the library, where I had already had the privilege of an interview so many times. All the well-known objects were there : the little statue of the Curé d'Ars on the writing-table ; the golden pounce-box ; the stone, probably from the Lido, with its hideous painting ; the Holy Father's coat-of-arms and beautiful motto, '*Omnia instaurare in Christo*' ; the silver snuff-box ; the papers, books and magazines ; in a corner at the right, the stick with the gold knob ready for his walk. And beyond, the sun was shining on Dubois' Jeanne d'Arc, the white marble busts of Pius IX and Leo XIII, and the white lacquered bookshelves.

" The Pope opened the document I had brought him and began to read. I watched the movement of his lips and the expression of his countenance. He gave signs of assent and pleasure. There were even tears in his eyes. Several times, and especially at the end, he murmured in a low voice :

" '*Bello ! Bellissimo !*'

" We spoke of the wonderful Encyclical and, as I waxed enthusiastic over it, the Pope said :

" ' I am no diplomat, but I must uphold the law of my God. Only one thing matters : whether the Church has, or has not, been divinely insti-

tuted by our Lord Jesus Christ. If she has, nothing can make her give up her rights, her hierarchy, property and liberty.' We always come back to that word, ' liberty.' "

That very evening, the *Osservatore Romano* printed the document. The whole of the Church of France was with the Pope. The old Gallicanism was a thing of the past.

* * * *

Already during the time when the scheme for the Separation of Church and State was being mooted, Pius X in alluding to it, had expressed his confidence in the destiny of France. On the 23rd of September 1904, he had addressed a kind of lyrical allocution to the pilgrims from Paris, which is not the only one of its kind found among his Acts. For instance, the first time he replied to the New Year's wishes of the Sacred College, he kept on repeating as a refrain :

" The Shed of Bethlehem is a school," and from this refrain he drew six different lessons. With the pilgrims of 1904 he developed the theme : " God loves France," and towards the end of his discourse, in which he had not in any way concealed the ingratitude and faults of that country, he uttered these words : " Carry away with you not only the hope but the certainty that our Lord Jesus Christ, in the infinite goodness of His

merciful Heart, will save your country and preserve it to the Church."

Then came the rejection of the Concordat, official insults of various kinds offered to the heads of the Church and to the Church herself, by French ministers. But there was, after the Separation, that noble rising up of Catholics—both priests and people accepting spoliation rather than disobey the Pastor who knows the way. There was the significant time of the inventories and, following in its wake, so many things spoken and written, so many proofs of fidelity—some of which are known, but many hidden—that Pius X, living very near to God, did not hesitate to confirm in a more solemn and almost startling manner, the previsions expressed by him in 1904. In fact, the Consistorial Allocution of the 29th of November was and will remain, for us and for others, a comfort and, as it were, a fountain of hope. The Pope was giving the cardinal's hat to some English, Dutch, American and French cardinals. The evening before, he had written out the discourse with his own hand. The next morning he told them that purple is a sign of grief and sacrifice, but in the very pain of unceasing combat there will be consolation.

"Be comforted, beloved sons of England and Holland, for in the holy joy of your fellow-

countrymen at your elevation to the Cardinalate is shown the lively faith by which the Catholics are animated. Your heart, as mine, welcomes the hope that their example will draw many others back into the bosom of the Church.

" This hope is very sweet to me in the presence of you who come from America. The enthusiasm with which the news of your elevation to the purple was received, the marks of joy shown by all classes of society, the acclamations, mingled with blessings, good wishes and heartfelt salutations, at the time of your departure from New York and Boston, and lastly your triumphal voyage across the ocean under the protection of the papal flag, inspire me not only with the hope but the certitude that our Lord on your return will multiply the fruits of your apostolate, and that over those hospitable shores, where all the nations of the world are made welcome, where liberty is rightly understood and the good of all provided for, He will reign and shed abroad His Glory. . . .

" What shall I say to you, sons of France, groaning beneath the weight of persecution? The people, who entered into covenant with God at the baptismal font of Rheims, will repent and return to their first vocation. The merits of so many sons of France, who are preaching the Gospel

in almost every land, many of whom have sealed their faith with their blood; the prayers of so many saints, whose burning desire is that their beloved fellow-countrymen may be partakers with them of the glory of heaven; the generous devotion of so many of her children, who have shrunk from no sacrifice to provide for the needs of the clergy and the dignity of Catholic worship . . . will without doubt call down upon the nation the mercies of God. Sin will not go unpunished, but the daughter of so many merits, so many sighs, so many tears, will not perish.

"The day will come, and We hope it is not far off, when France, as Saul on the road to Damascus, will be bathed in heavenly light and hear a Voice saying:

"'My daughter, why persecutest thou Me?' And when she asks: 'Who art thou, Lord?' the Voice will answer: 'I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad, because in thy persistence thou art destroying thyself.' And she, trembling and astonished, will say: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' And He will say: 'Arise, and wash away the stains which have defiled thee, stir up again the remembrance of thy fervour and thy covenant with Me, and go forth, eldest daughter of the Church, predestined nation, vessel of election, as

in the past, to carry My Name before all the nations and all the kings of the earth.' "

7. *Modernism.*—The Encyclical, *Pascendi dominici gregis*, 8th of September 1907, is undoubtedly the longest of those written by Pius X. There are ninety-three pages of small, closely printed type. It exposes a most subtle heresy. Historians, theologians, writers of commentaries, novelists, in Italy, Germany, France, England and other countries, nearly all of them men of culture, managed successfully to cloak their meaning under formulas of respect and, while pretending to benefit the Church by " modernising " her, they were in reality utterly destroying her authority, dogma and spirit.

The preparation for this exhaustive discussion of the errors or, as we might call it, the entire rebuilding of a heresy which had been purposely produced piece-meal, hidden and camouflaged, took no less than two years.

At first the Pope did not speak directly but, in his name and by his orders, there appeared, on the 3rd of July in that year, a Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office, censuring and proscribing sixty-five erroneous propositions, drawn from books or articles written by modernists.

To begin with, the new *Syllabus* pointed out the

claim of the modernists to dispense with the judgment of Rome. For they declared that " the ecclesiastical law prescribing a preliminary censorship of books on the Holy Scriptures does not extend to writers who apply themselves to the critical or scientific interpretation of the books of the Old and New Testaments."

May not heresy be given liberty to promulgate its doctrines and deceive good people ?

We see at once in this caution of the new school a spirit of insubordination and pride, the hateful spirit that claims its rights against hypothetical wrongs, whose baneful influence on human policy knows no bounds.

Then, as pride refused to submit, the modernists had the hardihood formally to place their little tentative knowledge of one day above the divine and age-long knowledge of the Church ; they put forward in varying terms the following proposition, which was summed up and condemned by the Holy Office :

" The interpretation of the Holy Scriptures by the Church is undoubtedly not to be despised ; nevertheless it is subordinate to the more competent judgment and correction of commentators."

This is a denial of the Divine constitution of the Church. The religious society founded by Jesus Christ, which has received the promise of unfailing

help to the end of time, is to be at the beck and call of searchers into the meaning of words, grammarians, creators of philosophical quibbles, unauthorised inventors of hypotheses and glosses, of rebellious man seeking in revelation what will never be found there—every age has attempted it more or less—the entire liberation of the instincts of nature and the glorification of the little man of intellect, whom every one must believe, if not worship.

This is no exaggeration, and the following propositions, condemned by the Holy Office and indicated by numbers 6, 7, 11 and 14 of the Decree, show how utterly warped is the spirit of modernism which has its beginning in high thoughts of self, and a determination to submit to no one.

(Erroneous proposition.) "6. — In doctrinal definitions, the Church taught and the teaching Church work together, so that the teaching Church has merely to sanction the common opinions of the Church taught."

(Erroneous proposition.) "7. — When the Church condemns error, she cannot exact the interior adherence of the faithful to the judgments passed by her."

(Erroneous proposition.) "11.—Divine inspiration does not extend to the whole of Sacred Scripture in such a way as to preserve from error each and every part."

(Erroneous proposition.) " 14.—In many of their narratives, the evangelists have related not so much what is true as what they considered, though false, would be more profitable to their readers."

Thus we go on from one error to another, till we reach the 20th, which does away with the whole of the Old Testament and the whole of the New.

(Erroneous proposition.) " 20.—Revelation can have been nothing else than the consciousness, acquired by man, of the relations existing between God and himself."

So the negations continue. Christ, the Son of God, is denied ; the doctrine of the expiatory death of Christ is declared to be not evangelical but simply " Pauline " ; the Nicene Creed, the teaching of the ancient Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, considered by modern commentators far too favourable to the Divinity of Jesus Christ, " are not what Jesus taught ; " the Sacraments are no longer the Sacraments, their only object is to recall to the mind of man " the ever beneficent presence of the Creator " (Proposition 41) ; each one of the Sacraments is the object of a special blasphemy. For the modernist there is, therefore, no longer a religion divinely instituted, no longer a Redeemer ; it is a foregone conclusion that there can no longer be a Church ; after such premises,

it would seem superfluous to deny her expressly ; nevertheless, modernism does deny her, and she loses her essential and Divine filiation, becoming simply an act subject to change.

And all this ends in an affirmation of absolute nothingness, summed up in the Decree under No. 58 :

" Truth is no more immutable than man himself, for it is evolved with him, in him and by him."

Man is made omnipotent ; Truth is created by him—an old error, introduced in the twentieth century as a discovery and an advance.

This formidable Act, accusing and condemning modernism, was a warning to Christians ; it made clear to those who might be in doubt, that the fact of upholding any one of the condemned propositions constituted a grave sin ; but it had not as yet gone down to the root of the heresy, nor shown what its results would be. This was the object of the Encyclical, *Pascendi*, published two months later.

This doctrinal treatise—for such it may be called—first defines the position of modernists. It is not now a question, as it has so often been before, of men who are openly breaking with the Church they are attacking. On the contrary, this war is from within, waged by pretended re-

formers, anxious, above all, for the good of the Church, which they wish to reconcile with the times.

"Enemies of the Church they are in sooth," says the Pope; "to say they are her worst enemies is not far from the truth. It is not from without, as we have already observed, but from within that they plot her destruction; the danger to-day is in the most vital parts of the Church; their blows are the more sure because they know well where to strike her. . . . Mingling in themselves rationalism and Catholicism, they strike with such refined subtlety that souls, not on their guard, are easily taken in. . . . Moreover, suspicion is allayed by the fact that their lives are full of activity, they are remarkably keen and assiduous in pursuing all branches of study, and their morals are usually to be commended for their austerity. . . . We have treated them at first with gentleness, as sons, then with severity; lastly, much against Our will, We have reprimanded them publicly. You are not ignorant, Venerable Brethren, of the sterility of Our efforts; they bow their heads one moment, to raise them more proudly the next. If they alone were in question, We might perhaps pass it over; but it is the safety of the Catholic Religion that is at stake. Therefore We may no longer keep silence, for it would

henceforth be a crime! It is time to unmask these men, to show them to the whole Church in their true colours."

The three dominant ideas of modernism, which Rome is once again about to examine and to refute with all the power of her wisdom and of long-established habit, are: *agnosticism*, *immanentism* and *evolutionism*.

To proclaim God to be unknowable is to be ignorant of man and his gift of reason; through the whole course of her history, the Church has taught the contrary, thus upholding the dignity of man; and the final condemnation of agnosticism pronounced by the Vatican Council touches us closely:—"If any one says that the One True God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason, by means of things created, let him be anathema."

But how do modernists make the transition from agnosticism, "which is a state of pure nescience," to scientific and historic atheism? The Pope replies: "Let him answer who can." For to say that a thing cannot be known does not authorise us to deny it.

The matter is in abeyance. Logically, they ought to allow the hypothesis of the existence of God, but they will not do this. "It is a fixed and established principle among them that both science

and history must be atheistic; and within their boundaries there is room for nothing but phenomena; God and all that is divine are utterly excluded."

But before attacking dogma and morals, it is needful to explain the existence of religion, and this the modernists have attempted to do. After denying to reason all power of knowing God, and doing away with Revelation, heresy seeks the explanation in the nature of man and in life.

"Every vital phenomenon . . . is aroused, in the first instance, by a necessity or desire, and its first manifestation is a motion of the heart called consciousness.

"It follows that, since God is the object of religion, faith, which is the principle and foundation of all religion, is found in a certain interior consciousness which is generated by the need of the Divine."

In modernism, so far, we have only encountered negations; have we now reached the moment when we shall find in it a positive system, something newly erected? It is time to make known to all the exceeding malignity of the heresy, how, while it appears to build up, in reality it is completely destroying Christianity and every other form of religion besides. According to modernists, religion springs from the need of the Divine.

" And let no one look for an exception in favour of the Catholic Church ; she is placed on the same footing as the others. Her cradle was the consciousness of Jesus Christ, a man endowed with the most exquisitely beautiful nature, such as never was nor ever will be again ; and there she was born, and from no other principle than *vital immanence*. We are stupefied at being confronted with so daring an assertion, so glib a blasphemy. And it is not only unbelievers, Venerable Brethren, who put forward such audacious statements. There are Catholics and even not a few priests who vaunt them publicly."

So far, no place has been given to intellect in this heresy. Now let intellect undertake to analyse consciousness and to interpret the vague and primitive formula. When these formulas have sunk deeper in, become more definite and been sanctioned by the authority of the Church, they constitute dogma. Hence, dogma would have its origin in the believer himself. " And since the absolute, which is the object of this consciousness, has infinitely varied aspects under which it may appear at different times ; and as the believer, on his side, may pass through widely varied states, it follows that dogmatic formulas are subject to the same vicissitudes and, therefore, to the same mutations."

The conclusion of the Pope is therefore :

" The way is thus opened to the substantial variation of dogma."

One of the favourite maxims of modernism is that " religious evolution should co-ordinate itself to intellectual and moral evolution," or, to express it better and according to the phrase of one of their masters, " should *subject* itself." This is the third principle of the heresy, *the evolution of dogma.*

The Pope continues :

" Still more light is thrown on these doctrines of the modernists by their conduct, which is a reflection of their opinions. To hear them or to read their writings, we are tempted to think they are in contradiction with themselves, that they are oscillating and uncertain. Far from it ; all is done with due consideration and intention, but in the light of the principle that faith and science are alien one to another. One page of their writings might be signed by a Catholic ; turn over the page and it might be written by a rationalist. If they write history, there is no mention of the divinity of Jesus Christ ; yet if they mount the pulpit, they proclaim it loudly. As historians, they despise the Fathers and Councils ; when they catechise, they quote them with respect. . . . In the same way, by force of the principle that science

has no dependence on faith, if they discourse on philosophy, history, or criticism, they proclaim in numberless ways—evincing no horror at thus following in the footsteps of Luther—their contempt of Catholic teaching, of the Holy Fathers, of Œcumenical Councils, of ecclesiastical authority ; when reprimanded on this point, they protest loudly, and complain with bitterness that they are deprived of liberty. Lastly, since faith is subordinated to science, they reprove the Church publicly on every occasion, because she refuses to subject and accommodate dogma to the opinions of philosophers ; as to themselves, after having made a clean sweep of the ancient theology, they strain every effort to introduce another, which shall be acceptable to the ramblings of the same philosophers."

Further on, the Pope sums up the so-called *reforms* which heresy counsels the Church to adopt and actually presumes to impose on her.

" There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in Catholicism," he says, " which it does not attack."

We cannot reproduce in full the enumeration which proves this statement of the Sovereign Pontiff. A few points will suffice to give a true idea of modernists and modernism. No more scholastic philosophy, they say, in seminaries :— what a magnificent though indirect eulogy is

contained in this rejection by the rebel !—it must be banished to the realms of history and worn-out systems. In place of Thomist doctrine, modern philosophy will be taught ; dogma will be made to agree with what the teachers of error call " science and history," which is in reality nothing else than the particular opinions of certain scholars and historians favourable to modernism ; the government of the Church will be reformed in every branch, it also will be put into line with " democracy " ; the Roman Congregations, especially those of the Holy Office and the Index, which are a nuisance to heresy, will be rendered innocuous ; ecclesiastical celibacy will be abolished.

Pius X has defined such doctrine *as the meeting-place of all the heresies*. Modernism does not differ from actual Free Thought, except in its claim to remain Catholic. It has in reality denied everything but the little obscure feeling and aspiration towards the ideal, which it continues to call religion. It is satisfied with the wholesale ruin it has accomplished, at least in theory, and with the place that it hopes henceforth to occupy, not to mention the moral enfranchisement which its constant proximity to Protestantism has doubtless led it to claim. Another example, among many others found in history, of the truth that heretics nearly always work for their own advantage. No doubt

they may have something else in view, but they do not forget themselves.

The modernist wishes to destroy the Church, because he cannot endure to have a master; he builds up again, but for his own personal advantage. He becomes the creator—of what a world! He is a king—what is his kingdom?—Religion! Henceforward, religion is to be what he wills it to be. The little modernist is satisfied. He and his colleagues will settle it. An inkpot kingdom! The victory of those who wield commas and invent hypotheses! If morality continues to be troublesome, it must be altered.

God will depend on the will of some censorious priest, or some ill-instructed layman, for whom the charge of temerity will always be an encomium, synonymous with noble daring and the first step in a career of genius.

In the Pontifical Letter, in which the doctrine of the Church is re-established and vindicated point by point, it is a magnificent sight to see rising up on every page venerable and powerful witnesses from bygone centuries, when the same errors, probably even then ancient, were advanced by minds adventurous or perverse. The passages quoted by the Pope, decisions of the second Council of Nice, the fourth of Constantinople, the Council of Trent, the Vatican Council, doctrinal decisions

of Leo X, Gregory XVI, Pius IX and Leo XIII, restore the order which has been tampered with, and the reader, filled with admiration at the majesty, reasonableness and loving-kindness of Catholic dogma, thanks the Church for her blessed refusal to come to terms, which is an essential act of fealty due to Truth.

We may see more clearly now the justness of each part of the Encyclical, especially of that line in which Pius X designates the remote causes of a heresy such as this.

" The remote causes," he says, " seem to us to be reducible to two—curiosity and pride." How true this is ! As regards pride, there is no need to dwell on it, after what we have said already. All modernists have been full of pride, some even to childishness. Curiosity—not a praiseworthy desire for knowledge, but the inconstancy of that desire—the futile pouring out of the mind on all and every subject, the want of depth, the importance attached to imagination and sentiment in a sphere which does not belong to them, appear to have been very common faults among modernists.

A thought of Leo XIII quoted in the Encyclical, *Pascendi*, explains why modernism has found more adherents in our days than it would have done in any other period of history.

" If the cause of these errors is carefully

sought," said Leo XIII, " it will be found especially in this : as ardour for natural sciences has increased, the higher and more austere sciences have fallen into the background ; some even are almost forgotten. . . ."

We may be sure of this : in the thirteenth century, when the " austere sciences " were cultivated, modernism would have had far less success than it has nowadays. It would not have encountered such a lack of common sense, or so much ignorance as to principles.

In fact, when we read the lives of certain modernists, we wonder how refined souls, almost feminine in their sensibility, sincere, if somewhat vague in their piety, and of undeniable devotion, can have fallen victims to such gross sophism. It would be hard to understand, did we not realise the dark ways of pride in souls, and the state of weakness generated by the turmoil of life and the dissipation of their energies. Men of this stamp not having sufficiently studied fundamental truths, possessed with a passion for success, which they deceive themselves into thinking is the desire for an apostolate, have given themselves up to the most humiliating servitude when confronted with the simple words, progress, science and liberty. They fall away, victims to self-love and fashion. They have lost that exquisite virtue which Pius X,

in the last consistorial allocution uttered by him in 1914, named so beautifully : " a virginal delicacy in matters of doctrine." The utter insignificance of the philosophical solutions to which both priests and laymen attach themselves shows, alas ! that they have lost even those qualities of good taste and delicacy which they once possessed.

One of the leaders of this heresy, Father Tyrrell, an Englishman, instead of bringing forward the usual argument about philosophers who have been condemned by Rome, and complaining that the system had not been understood, had the insolence to declare, on the contrary, that the portrait was a good one and to appear astonished thereat. In a long article published by *The Times*, the 30th of September 1907, he said :

" By far the greater part of this document is consecrated to an exposition and discussion of modernism. The author is some subtle scholastic theologian, extraordinarily familiar with his subject which, nevertheless, he criticises by the light of his own principles. If this were not self-evident, we should be tempted now and then to believe that it is the work of a traitor to orthodoxy, so seducing to every cultured mind is the portrait he draws of modernism. . . ." Further on, showing how hard were the blows he had received, he said again : " No modernist has any right to be

surprised at this Encyclical, though he may marvel at the courage and unaccustomed simplicity with which, leaving aside diplomacy and the usual equivocations, it presents fearlessly before the eyes of an astonished world, all the logical consequences, practical as well as speculative, of scholastic theology. . . ."

The expression occurs again and again in Tyrrell's defence, and it is that of one vanquished by St. Thomas. The same religious had said three years before : " It is the whole meaning of Revelation which is at stake."

The Pope had judged rightly. He had placed *his* world—not to mention *the* world—in safety, by denouncing a new Protestantism, already widespread, more cunning, more cultured, but no less dangerous than that of Luther.

As the leaders of modernism did not submit, either after the Decree of the 3rd of July or the Encyclical of the 8th of September, he proclaimed by a *Motu proprio* on the 18th of November that " if any person had the temerity to defend any one of the propositions, opinions and doctrines condemned in either of these documents," he would incur, *ipso facto*, the penalty of excommunication.

8. *Exhortation to the Catholic Clergy*.—On the occasion of the golden jubilee of his priesthood,

on the 4th of August 1908, Pius X delivered an exhortation addressed to the Catholic Clergy which has become famous. The date affixed to this homily, as we may term it, on the " Man of God," was that of the day which opened the sixth year of his pontificate.

" The priest," says the Pope, " cannot be good or bad for himself alone. How vital to his people are his conduct and manner of life !

" In a good priest we have a treasure of great value. Our Lord has expressed this thought, when, in order to show in what the activities of a priest should consist, He compared him to salt and to light.

" A priest, then, is the light of the world, the salt of the earth. Of course every one knows that his special work is to teach Christian truth, but can it be doubted that his ministry will be practically useless unless he shows forth by example what he teaches by word of mouth ? . . . That is why Christ Himself, Who is the model of priests, first taught by example and then by words. . . . We have therefore to fulfil the part of Christ ; in carrying out the mission He has entrusted to us, we must have in view the same aims that He set before Himself. As it is a sign of true friendship to have the same likes and dislikes, we are bound, as His friends, to conform our ideas to

those of Jesus Christ, Who is *holy*, *innocent*, and *undefiled*."

These words, simple in their depth and accessible to the humblest Christian, were written by Pius X himself in Italian, during the days preceding the month of August. The heat had put an end to the audiences for a time. His Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val, told us :

" I used to see him every morning writing his Exhortation. He did it with extraordinary facility, and when I came in he would stop and say :

" ' Is this all right ? Don't hesitate to correct it.' "

The Cardinal corrected nothing ; there was nothing to be changed in a work prepared and cemented by daily meditation during a priesthood of fifty years.

Enlarging on the principles laid down in the opening lines, the Pope shows how the future priest is led on by degrees, first as subdeacon, then deacon, towards the priesthood, and as each new stage is reached, he is taught to realise the increasing holiness of life which should accompany it.

That is what matters, he says.

" If this holiness of life, which consists above all in a super-eminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, is wanting to the priest, everything is wanting. For without this, even the treasures of a high degree

of learning—and We are careful to encourage this amongst the clergy—even gifts of practicality and organisation, however useful they may be to the Church and to individuals, are often, nevertheless, the cause of grievous evils. But how many wonderful works may be undertaken for the salvation of God's people and brought to a successful issue by a man of true sanctity, even though he be the last of all. We had a striking proof of this, not long ago, in John Baptist Vianney, that perfect pastor of souls, and it is a cause of rejoicing to Us that We Ourselves have awarded to him the honours of Beatification."

There can be no sanctity without grace, and grace is obtained through prayer.

" How many opportunities of rising towards God are found by souls who desire earnestly their own sanctification as well as that of their neighbour. Interior struggles, the violence and pertinacity of temptation, the lack of virtue, the weakness and barrenness of our works, sins and negligences without number and the fear of God's judgments are all powerful means inciting us to weep before God, and thus to gain His aid and freely to heap up merits for ourselves.

" It is not for ourselves alone that we must weep. In the flood of sin which is rushing in upon the world, it is our duty, above all, to make supplica-

tion, and to draw down the divine mercy. . . . Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people ! "

Every day a special time should be set apart for meditation. The priest is obliged, so to speak, to pass his life brushing against evil, " so that often in the very exercise of his pastoral duties, he has reason to fear the secret wiles of the serpent. . . . It is apparent then that there exists a great and urgent necessity to return daily to the contemplation of eternal things, that the mind and the will, deriving fresh strength therefrom, may be fortified against all allurements.

" We find a sad corroboration of these truths in the lives of priests who have little appreciation of, perhaps even an aversion to, meditation on divine things. In these men the sense of Christ's presence, which is so precious a gift, is well-nigh extinguished ; their hearts are wholly turned to mundane things—seekers after trifles, wasting their time in futile gossip, discharging their duties with tepidity, coldness, or even baseness. . . .

" Among those who find *recollection of heart* a burden, or who neglect it, there are some who do not attempt to conceal the interior wretchedness caused by such a state, but plead as an excuse the fact that they have thrown themselves without reserve into the *vortex* of their ministry, to work for the greater good of their neighbour. This is

a grievous error. Being unaccustomed to converse with God, there is no breath of the Divine in their mouths when they speak to men . . . so that the Gospel message seems to be almost without life. When they speak, however much they may be praised for their ability and eloquence, the voice of the Good Shepherd is not heard. . . ."

With meditation must be combined spiritual reading, especially the Holy Scriptures. Many go astray " above all because, instead of spiritual and holy reading, they prefer all sorts of books of a very different type and many papers full of subtle errors and corruption. . . .

" Be on your guard, beloved sons! Put no trust in your advancing years, nor let yourselves be deceived by the delusive hope that you will thus work more efficaciously for the common weal."

This tone of affection and fatherly severity runs all through the exhortation. The Pope further recommends to priests, " dazzling " chastity, great charity " for all the sick, the blind, the lame, the paralysed "—which is mainly to be understood in a figurative sense. He advises them to make an annual retreat, and to unite among themselves, under the sanction and rule of the bishop, to render mutual assistance to one another in times of stress, to protect the honour of their

name and office against unjust attacks, to promote sacred knowledge and, above all, devotion.

" The annals of the Church bear witness to the excellent fruit derived from this kind of communion in the days when priests generally lived a common life. Why should not something of the kind be revived in our days, as far as is compatible with the different places and offices ? "

The concluding words of this conference given by the Sovereign Pontiff to his sons, the priests of the Catholic world, are most touching ; Pius X declares that he constantly raises his eyes to heaven and repeats the prayer, made by Jesus Christ Himself, for all the Catholic clergy :

" Holy Father . . . sanctify them." He knows that in this prayer many of the faithful unite with him, the Head of souls, who knows not only what is happening in the world, but the secrets of knights and of saints, and he assures tempted, persecuted, tried and calumniated priests that, both in the cloister and in the world, in many countries there are Christians who are offering their lives to God to the end that, moved by their love, He may uphold all priests and make them conformable to the Divine Model.

After reading this exhortation we cannot but feel that Pius X, in describing the marks of a perfect priest, has unconsciously traced his own

portrait. His was the life of piety, prayer, charity, chastity, of the perfect observance of every point of laws and counsels ; and he was, moreover, full of courage. As from his youth up, he had had no fear of any duty, so likewise had he no fear of man. The intrigues and importunities of the great, the anguish of his own heart when forced to give pain to any of his faithful, or to the nations committed to his care, had no power to intimidate the son of Margherita Sanson and the *cursore* of Riese.

Those who live far aloof from the Catholic Church, even those who do not know her or, it may be, are fighting against her, cannot, if they are in good faith, withhold their admiration, nay more, their veneration, from this priest, so holy and humble of heart, so full of light, so terrible to the powers of darkness, so mortified and simple, that he resembles his Master as far as the human can resemble the Divine.

He cared not only for Catholics but for the whole human race. In his first allocution to the Sacred College, he uttered these noble words, which are a manifestation of his boundless charity :

" Ours is a sublime Mission, for it rises above this transient world, to seek eternal riches ; no boundaries shut it in, its interests are world-wide ; its duty is to secure a full regard for the

precepts of the Gospel and to have a care, not only for all the faithful, but *for every soul for whom Christ died.*"

* * * *

We cannot undertake to analyse all the important Acts of Pius X's Pontificate. It would need more than one volume, and this task will be the privilege of some historian in the future. The examples that we have chosen can give no adequate idea of his great activity in the sphere of reform.

The list of *Acta apostolicæ sedis*, if given in full, would be a mighty one! The following are a few of the titles, most expressive in themselves, selected from a large number of others.

Apostolic Constitution, *Commissum nobis*, against the *veto* of secular powers in pontifical elections; Encyclical, *Acerbo nimis*, on the teaching of Christian doctrine; Letter on the Apostolic Visitation of all the churches and holy places of Rome; *Motu proprio*, ordering the publication of a Vatican edition of liturgical books containing the Gregorian melodies; Apostolic Constitution, *Sapienti consilio*, on the reorganisation of the Roman Curia; Apostolic Constitution, *Divino afflatu*, on the Psalter of the Roman Breviary (in reality a new and most felicitous arrangement of the prayers recited by ecclesiastics and numerous religious throughout the world); Letter entrust-

ing to the Benedictine Order the work of restoring to its primitive accuracy the text of St. Jerome's version of the Bible; Apostolic Letter, *Vinea electa*, for the erection of the pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome; Apostolic Constitution, which decreed that, from 1909, an official report should be published by the Vatican press, containing the Acts of the Holy See and the Roman Congregations; Encyclical on the Separation of Church and State in Portugal; Letter to the French Episcopate on the "*Sillon*"; Discourse to French Pilgrims on the "*confessionalité des œuvres*"; Encyclical to the Episcopate of Russian Poland; Letter to the Bishops of Latin America, discussing the means of remedying the deplorable condition of the Indians; Encyclical Letter to the Bishops of Germany on Associations of working-men, both Catholic and mixed. . . .

These and other Acts of Pius X, and of the various Roman Congregations or the Secretariate of State, all acting under the authority of the Pope, fill eight volumes of closely printed matter. They cannot be read without evoking a feeling of admiration for the intellect which has directed such a work, the nobility which penetrates it, the strong, luminous faith — well acquainted with human weakness, but jealous for the rights of God—which, in vindicating these rights, never

fails to safeguard the truth, the sovereign good of every man.

How far superior are books of this kind to those drawn up by the heads of states, in which it is evident that words often conceal the truth ! The free style of the Vatican Latinists may be somewhat startling, but the greatness of these pages lies not merely in the form. The manifest integrity, clear-sighted perspicuity, which perceives the danger and condemns the error long before we are aware of it, the constant appeal to God or to the age-long tradition into which He has not allowed a single error to creep ; all this extraordinary and super-natural atmosphere is a delight to the soul, the elements of whose existence are light and peace.

We cannot help wondering why the *Acta* are so little read, why the history of the Church and these, her most valuable archives, are not studied in Catholic colleges, and why we ignore a treasure which is possessed by us alone. If in days to come young people are taught this most wonderful history of all, the spontaneous joy of future genera-tions, as they realise their dignity and feel them-selves better equipped for the struggle of life, will be a sufficient reward for those innovators whose action has thus strengthened their faith.

CHAPTER X

THE LAST DAYS OF PIUS X

Pius X governed the Church from the 4th of August 1903 to the 20th of August 1914.

He had reached his eightieth year on the 2nd of June. The war, which was to be his death, was at hand. He had foreseen this upheaval of the world; more than once he had said to Cardinal Merry del Val, when he was bringing him, in the morning, papers and telegrams of the previous evening, treating of some important matter:

"What is that in comparison with what is coming? The world-war is coming; before 1914 is over, it will be upon us."

The first time he spoke thus was when the Italians had landed on the coast of Tripoli (1911). Several months before the War had broken out over the world, the Pope was walking with Mgr. Bressan in the Vatican gardens; he said to him:

"After my death there will truly be *religio depopulata*."

The last reference of this kind was made, in May of the momentous year, to the Brazilian Minister, who was taking leave of the Sovereign Pontiff.

" You are fortunate," said the Pope, " you will not see the Great War at close quarters." The diplomatist, struck by this remark, which had not been called forth by any apparent sign, mentioned it to several friends in his letters.

In less than three months, five nations were mobilising their armies, and Germany was invading Belgium.

It is said that, having been asked twice by the Ambassador of Austria to bless the allied armies of Austria and Germany, Pius X replied :

" I bless peace." The words ring of him, nevertheless we have no proof that they are really his. Later on many things will assuredly come to light.

The great heart of the Pope gave way under the suffering and death of his children. When the War, which he had foreseen, broke out, he was physically unfit to face it, and as the brunt was also to fall on fathers and mothers far from where it was raging, so was he one of the first to succumb. He received the young foreign seminarists who were leaving Rome in obedience to the military regulations of their countries, and at the end of these audiences he was heard to say :

" How gladly would I give my life to avert this terrible scourge."

His last Pontifical Act was " an Exhortation to Catholics throughout the world." It is dated the 2nd of August 1914.

It is simply a cry of pain, a letter of eighteen lines, in which Pius X declares himself to be " pierced with anguish as to the lives and safety of so many individuals and nations." He exhorts priests to " organise public prayers in every parish," and the faithful to raise their hearts to " Him, Who alone is able to help : Christ, the Prince of Peace and All-Powerful Mediator with God."

A few days later, the rumour of the Pope's illness spread through Rome and the world. He was suffering from bronchitis. It seemed slight at first, but it soon became evident that the action of the heart was irregular and that his life was in danger. Towards the middle of the month, the malady increased. " May God's Will be done," said Pius X, " I think it is the end."

On the morning of the 18th of August he asked for Holy Viaticum, and soon after he lapsed into silence. He had the air of great calm and the angelic expression which had impressed so many on occasions when it would have seemed more

natural for him to be "the personification of majesty."

The beauty of his soul was so striking that the doctors made mention of it in their last bulletin. He understood all that was going on, but did not speak. Sometimes he would slowly make the sign of the Cross, which is also that of the sword and of faith. Several intimate friends, some high, some lowly, were admitted to see him. Those who came first he was able to bless; he simply pressed the hands of those who came later. The hands of his Secretary of State, who had so faithfully served him, he held for a long, long time between his own.

On the 19th of August, the great bell of St. Peter's, giving the signal to all the bells of the city, tolled *pro Pontifice agonizante*. On the 20th of August, before daybreak, Pius X gave up his soul to God.

Mourning throughout the world was deep and sincere. Not a Christian nor even an honest man but felt some grief that so great a soul had passed from the earth. In the *Times* of the 20th and 21st of August 1914, there appeared two articles on Pius X, the first written certainly by a Catholic, the second by a Protestant. Both render him great homage; but we may ask ourselves whether the non-Catholic, in reviewing the life-work of

the Pope, and in judging, from outside, the princely son of the poor who had passed away, does not surpass in justness, as in foresight, the judgment given the previous day by the Catholic. We subjoin quotations from these two articles :

Article from the *Times*, 20th of August 1914.— " It is probable that no Italian Cardinal was less known to the Curia than the Patriarch of Venice. The Vatican was at first disposed to regard him as a hard-working Bishop, of saintly simplicity of life and a rare modesty of character, and it waited with anxious curiosity to see into whose hands he would put himself for direction. Pius X soon showed that he intended unmistakably to be master in his own house. He altered the etiquette of his Court in a good many unessential matters, and speedily introduced one or two small reforms which led to greater economy. He consulted his Cardinals and Court officials and gladly heard their advice ; but he decided always for himself, and, beneath his gentle courtesy and deference, they soon discovered a very masterful firmness. . . .

" There had been much talk, during the first two months, of a change in the spirit of the Papacy For the future, it was said the Church

was to have a ' pious ' and not a political Pope. The words ' a pious Pope,' when used with this significance, aroused the new Pope's lively indignation.

" ' One would like to see,' he once said when still Patriarch of Venice, ' a Pope who was not pious. People who talk in this way imagine that a Pope ought to be relegated to the depths of the temple, occupied only in giving benedictions, and without any social influence. No ! it is not a Pope of that kind whom we need. Catholicism ought to exercise its influence on society, and in these days it has no right to retire to the background.'

" And in his allocution to the Cardinals, delivered in the first Consistory of the 9th of November 1903, he plainly announced the same idea. ' We cannot hide from ourselves the fact that we shall offend many people in saying that we must of necessity concern ourselves with politics. But whoever judges the question fairly must recognise that the Sovereign Pontiff, invested by God with the supreme magistracy, has not the right to separate political matters from the domain of faith and morals.'

" Leo XIII, himself, never proclaimed more clearly the political duties of the Pontificate. From the first it was apparent that his successor

would not suffer any derogation from the high claims of his office. . . ."

The great English newspaper here sums up the chief acts of Pius X, showing that he was ever faithful both to himself and to his office.

Article from the *Times*, 21st of August 1914.— " All men who hold sincere religion and personal holiness in honour will join with the Roman Catholic Church in her mourning for the Pontiff she has lost. The policy of Pius X has had many critics, not all of them outside the Church he ruled, but none has ever questioned the transparent honesty of his convictions or refused admiration for his priestly virtues. Sprung from the people, he loved and understood them as only a good parish priest can do. That was the secret of the love which he won amongst them from the first, and which at Venice made him a great popular power. Not that he ever courted popularity ; he taught them as one having authority and could insist upon obedience. But the Roman Church mourns in him something more than a saintly priest and a great bishop ; in him she also deplores a great Pope. In the sphere of Church politics his reign has witnessed grievous disasters. It has seen the Separation of Church and State in France and in Portugal, and the whole process of

' dechristianising ' national and social life, of which that measure was the symbol.

" Unprejudiced judges cannot blame a Pope for rejecting all compromise with a policy which, on the admission of its authors, was deliberately aimed at the destruction of the faith it was his mission to uphold. Compromise, it has been said, ought to have been possible, but there are principles which Rome cannot waive or abate.

" Pius X conceived that such principles were jeopardised in all the accommodations with the new system which were suggested to him. It was no light thing for him to impose upon the faithful clergy of France and of Portugal a course which brought them the loss of their revenues, their homes, and even of all legal right in their churches. But his decision was to him a question not of expediency, but of right and wrong. He gave it in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, and the wonderful obedience which the priests whom it impoverished have shown to his commands has filled with a just pride his children throughout the world.

" It is not, however, because Pius X did in this question what any other Pope would almost certainly have done that his own Church believes he will hold a distinguished place in the long line of Roman Pontiffs. It is in the internal affairs of

that vast and elaborate institution that he has done work which promises to leave its mark upon the ages. . . . The extent and the significance of the reforms he initiated have been hardly noticed beyond the limits of his own communion.

" It is no exaggeration to say that Giuseppe Sarto, the child of the labourer and the dressmaker, has made greater changes of his own motion in the domestic discipline of the Roman Church than almost any of his predecessors since the period of the Council of Trent. . . ."

A life grand in its simplicity ! Mgr. Bressan gives evidence of this in his account :

" From the 16th of September 1885 until his death I was constantly with him ; and I can bear witness that he was always devoted to duty, labour and self-sacrifice, without losing anything of his tranquillity and sweetness, without showing the least sign of weariness, or behaving as if he himself were of any importance whatsoever.

He said in his Will, this Sovereign of the Catholic world :

" I was born poor, I have lived poor, I desire to die poor."

His sisters lived on in their unassuming quarters in the Piazzi Rusticucci. At the beginning of his

reign, the heraldic commission sent to inquire of the Pope: "What title does Your Holiness wish given to your sisters? Princess? Countess?"

"Call them the sisters of the Pope," replied Pius X. They received neither title nor pension. Their sole privilege was to be received every week by the Pope, and occasionally to sit at his table. At his death, Pius X did not wish to leave these faithful women in want in their old age, but he only gave them what was necessary, begging his successor to allow them three hundred francs a month. He left his nephews ten thousand francs, on condition that his successor approved of the legacy, and he provided for the support of four hundred orphans, victims of the earthquake at Messina and Reggio in 1908.

With the exception of this last item, which was pure charity, the Will of the Pope in no way differed from that of a man of small means.

Anna and Maria, therefore, remained at Rome, keeping with them their niece, Ermenegilda Parolin, one of the ten children of Teresa Sarto, from her marriage with Giovanni Battista Parolin, owner of the inn *Alle due Spade* at Riese. Young, attractive, and with perfect manners, she would, in the old days, have been sought after and admired as though she were a princess of the royal blood; and probably advances were made which

would have facilitated her entrance into Roman society.

The Roman people said familiarly: "Good luck will fall on her." But, contrary to expectation, Gilda Parolin did not marry; she remained simple and hidden, accepting nothing, except alms for the charities of the Pope; she lived under the shadow of St. Peter's and the high walls of the Vatican, helping "the aunts" to receive the innumerable visitors rendered inevitable by their near relationship with the Pope; she learnt French and spoke it without any Italian accent. Of angelic piety, she made daily pilgrimages to the churches of Rome, while her principal occupation was to distribute quietly, in the city, gifts from the charity of Giuseppe Sarto, more lavish now than ever. She died, after a month's illness, on the 20th of January 1923, and the papers paid a singular tribute to the memory of this humble woman.

We quote a few passages written by Sig. Pio Molajoni in the *Giornale d'Italia*. He reminds his readers that, at the beginning of the Pontificate, the Sarto family had refused to be entered in the Year Book of the Italian nobility, according to ancient custom, as suggested by the Pontifical Heraldic Council.

"The Pope's relations, since the days in which

they used to regard the young curate, and later, the parish priest, as a minister of God, who was sanctifying the family, were accustomed to think and to judge as he did ; and at such a moment as this, their hearts, like his, were too keenly alive to the great burden and fresh responsibility that had fallen on him, to be influenced by any other motives. . . . The purple, which in olden times, would have been placed on the shoulders of the Pope's relatives immediately after his election, was not even dreamed of by his nephew, who knew that though his uncle had bowed his head under 'the great trial' of the Pontificate, he had no desire to impose a like sacrifice on his beloved family. . . .

" Thus Gilda Parolin passed the years of her youth. . . . Detached from vain pleasures and earthly joys, she spent twenty years in Rome, in the narrow circle of the intimates of her august relative, offering continual prayer to God that the sorrows, responsibilities and thorns of the Pontificate might not undermine the health of one who was so dear to her heart. . . . Round the gentle, modest form of Gilda Parolin, legend, ever closely allied to truth, will one day assuredly cling. Since a knowledge of the realities of her humble and hidden life was denied to her contemporaries, the chroniclers of a later day will weave into her

history tales of her virtue and gentle deeds. Rome, who has seen so many princely families born from the votes of conclaves, who has witnessed a noble multitude moving in the luminous wake of the mystic barque, has also seen, in the beginning of the twentieth century, a family of saints at the foot of the Papal Throne."

Several of Pius X's nephews and nieces were obliged to leave Venetia when Italy took part in the War. The country was full of Italian, French, English and Scottish soldiers. Everywhere houses were commandeered. Riese was almost on the outposts, for it is not far from the battlefield of Piave and Vittorio Veneto, where the Austrians were finally beaten at the end of October 1918—whence it has since changed its name to Vittoria della Vittoria. They determined to leave, but, before their departure, one of them wrote with a piece of chalk on the white house where Giuseppe Sarto was born :

" Spare this house, which belonged to Pius X." It was enough. Troops continued to pass through Riese, and officers and men seeing a house with the windows always closed, naturally went up to it ; but as soon as they had read the inscription, they made no attempt to enter. Even in an emergency such as that, the house of the Pope was respected ; the others were all occupied.

Some of the family, therefore, left the place. Women, children, and a few old men carrying bundles, they made up a group of some twenty persons, who succeeded with difficulty in reaching the railway station. Whither were they bound? For Rome, where the sisters of the dead Pope were living. They arrived there one evening, and poured into the little flat in the Piazza Rusticucci, which leads out of the Piazzo San Pietro. They were worn out and, after climbing the four flights of stairs, asked to be allowed to rest. Several slept on the floor. Next morning, the former Secretary of State of Pius X came to see and question them. They stood round him in a semi-circle.

"You have been through a terrible time, poor dear people!"

"Others have been worse off, Your Eminence."

"Tell me, what can I do for you?" continued the Cardinal.

"If Your Eminence could find us any work, we should be very glad."

Not a mention of assistance, no claim to any kind of favour. But they were the family of Pius X; the people of Rome soon learnt of their arrival and hastened to do what they could. The *maestra di scuola* was placed in a school, the clerks in some business establishment or office.

People would say : " Are you a Sarto ? Then come at once, there is room for you here ! "

As soon as peace was declared, these exiled Venetians all returned to their native soil.

In 1926, there only remained of the three faithful sisters who had gone with Pius X to Rome, Signorina Maria Sarto, now eighty years of age. She had inherited the family house at Riese, now looked upon as sacred, where, nigh upon a century ago, Giuseppe Sarto was born.

Being the sister of Pius X, she could not but resemble him, and the thought occurred to her of giving up this slender source of income and presenting it to the Commune of Riese. The official act was drawn up, and the Municipality of Riese determined reverently to keep guard over the relic thus committed to them and establish there a " Museum of Pius X."

Those who visit the flat in Rome inhabited by the last of the Sartos, can see to-day, hanging on the wall of the little sitting-room, an Address, signed in the name of the whole population of Riese by the Mayor, Bottio.

It was composed by a great-nephew of Pius X, Giuseppe Parolin, and the vellum is tastefully illuminated. On the left side there is a photograph of Margherita Sanson, on the right a drawing of the house. The inscription—for there

is one, in accordance with a fine Roman tradition—says a great deal in a few words :

" From the lofty heights of the Roman Pontificate—
Pius X,
of holy and venerated memory,
often turned his thoughts and heart
towards the calm peace of this humble home,
which, to-day, you,
Maria Sarto,
his favourite sister,
animated by an equal love for the land of your youth,
give in perpetuity to the Commune of Riese.
And Riese,
deeply touched and grateful,
receives the precious gift from your hands,
penetrated with just pride at being thus constituted the careful and loving guardian
of that humble and blessed edifice,
held by all to-day in veneration
as a holy place."

The readers of this book will have noticed that no mention has been made of any miraculous cures attributed to Pius X. A large number of facts of this kind were noted, even during the

lifetime of the Pope ; others of more recent date are attributed to his intercession. Their authenticity is supported by medical attestations and letters written by most trustworthy persons, narrating in detail the circumstances of these cures.

We have reason to believe that there exist, in view of a possible Beatification, more than a hundred of these written statements, which at any rate manifest the mind of the Catholic world, and the spontaneous and popular veneration which surrounds the memory of Pius X. We are but one of the faithful, to us no special mission is entrusted. Therefore, it has seemed more respectful, more in conformity with the wishes and counsels of the Church, to say nothing at present concerning those matters, which are being examined by her and which it belongs to her to decide. The faithful are unanimous in their desire, but judgment rests not with them.

THE END.

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